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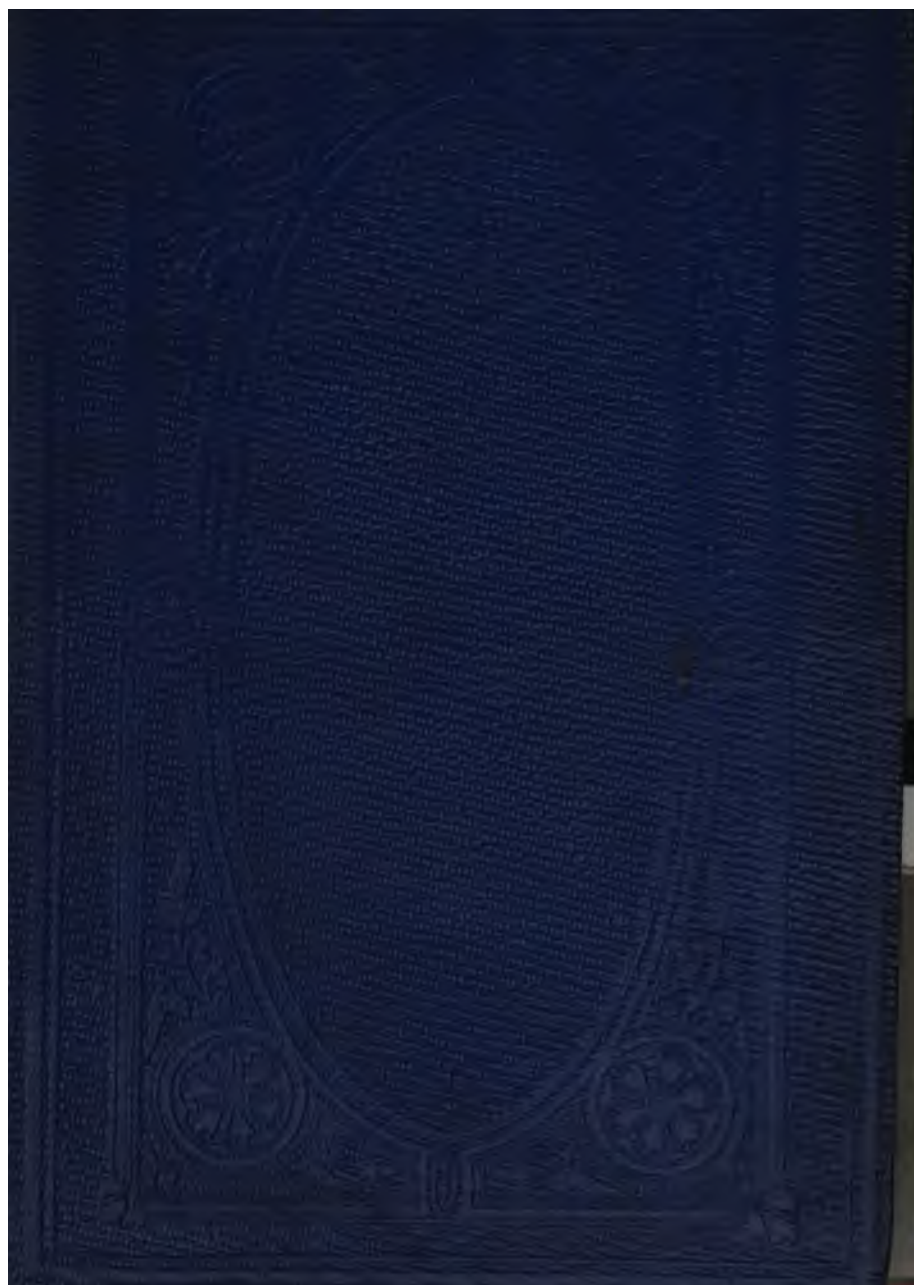
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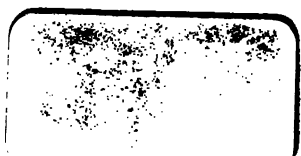
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GUILD HOUSE, DOUBLE BUTCHER ROW, SHREWSBURY.

HASTE TO THE RESCUE;

OR,

WORK WHILE IT IS DAY.

BY MRS CHARLES

Wightman

WITH PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR OF

"ENGLISH HEARTS AND ENGLISH HANDS."

"Go, labour on, while it is day,
The long dark night is hastening on;
Speed, speed thy work, up from thy sloth,
It is not thus that souls are won!

"See thousands dying at your side,
Your brethren, kindred, friends at home;
See millions perishing afar,
Haste, brethren, to the rescue come!"

LONDON:

JAMES NISBET AND CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.

M.DCCC.LIX.

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PAUL'S WORK.



**O God, for Christ's sake,
Gibe the Holy Spirit,
That this Book may be profitable to all who
read it;**

And advance Thy glory,

**and the
Salvation of Sinners!**

Amen.

PREFACE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH HEARTS AND ENGLISH HANDS,"
AND THE "MEMORIALS OF CAPTAIN HEDLEY VICARS."

It seems scarcely necessary to preface, even by a few words, a record of facts which—once known—can require no passport to the hearts of English readers.

Although still personally a stranger to the author, it has been my privilege to receive, from time to time, during the progress of this remarkable work, some of the following letters. Had no other benefit resulted, by the grace of God, from the publication of the little volume so frequently and kindly referred to by the writer of these letters, beyond its being to her an encouragement to efforts for winning the hearts of our working brothers to their God and Saviour, I should have been thankful, indeed, for such a seal as He has thus set upon it.

In earnestly pressing that this record of work amongst working-men at home should be given to the public, I feel sure that few truer benefits could be conferred by the press.

Here is a field, "white unto the harvest" indeed, to be found in every English parish ; and ready for gleaner as well as for reaper. God grant that the wives, the mothers, and the daughters of England may all take heart, as they read the sure evidence of God's blessing crowning this labour of love, to claim the allotment of ground suited to their own time, strength, energy, or age, within reach of their homes ; and therein to obey the Divine command, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand ; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether both shall be alike good."

And what work for God can fail, *in the end*, if always in the worker's heart arises unto Him such prayer as this, "Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings with Thy most gracious favour, and further us with Thy continual help ; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in Thee, we may glorify Thy holy Name ; through Jesus Christ our Lord." *

Only let our hearts be continually lifted up for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit ; and the answer will come, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

* Collect after Communion Service.

Known unto God alone will be the final amount of blessing wrought by the labours recorded in this volume,—already so distinctly owned by Him. “THE DAY will declare it.” Until then, we who look on, and humbly desire to follow in the foot-prints of so much persevering faith, zeal, and love, in His service, can but say for her who has been thus highly favoured, “We bless you in the name of the Lord ;” believing that when her day of work is over she will hear her Master’s gracious voice saying, “She hath done what she could.” “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”



AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THIS little book is written chiefly for the educated classes, and has one object—the stirring up of every heart to more earnest and prayerful effort to rescue those who are placed by God in a less favoured position, from the thralldom of THE ONE besetting temptation, which is to them the fruitful source of *all* other sin and sorrow, and by loving acts of sympathy and kindness to elevate them socially and morally.

During the period of eighteen months, the writer has conversed with upwards of five hundred working-men ; and, with few exceptions, has visited them at their homes in the evenings, thus becoming personally acquainted with their wives and families ; and entering into their domestic cares and trials, sorrows and joys, in no common way.

When urged to publish the facts and incidents connected with this intercourse, by several persons in whose judgment the writer placed the greatest confidence, and especially by the author of “English Hearts and English Hands,” who has most earnestly entreated her to

do so, a difficulty arose from the entire absence of any notes or diary.

The letters, which form the larger portion of this little book, are therefore substituted, as they contain the only records which have been kept. Most of these letters are addressed to a sister. This fact, it is hoped, will be sufficient to ward off the shafts of the generous critic, who will not expect to find, in the unpremeditated and unrestrained flow of a familiar correspondence, anything more than facts truthfully recorded,—the simple “Annals of the Poor.”

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

"Oh, this old world might be better,
If each hand would break a fetter;
If each one would do his part
To bind up one stricken heart."

THIS little book contains a series of facts and incidents which occurred during an intercourse of eighteen months with above five hundred working-men and their families in the town of Shrewsbury.

Its object is to enlist the sympathy and love of the educated and refined class to devote heart and life in behalf of their noble-minded brothers and sisters whose lot is cast in a lower position, one of toil and great temptation ; and to shew, by way of encouragement, how much may be done by individual effort.

Very few persons have any adequate notions of the trials, temptations, and snares by which a working-man is surrounded. They know nothing of his habits of thought, the high-minded independence of his feelings, his affectionate courtesy and gentleness, and the generous depth of his friendship.

Last winter, when travelling from Somersetshire, a clergyman in the train, with whom I am acquainted, made the old assertion, "The working-classes are so ungrateful."

It is to refute this charge, which none would make

who had ever *gained* the heart of the poor people—to prove that it is not only untrue, but that the working-classes are as delicately alive to sympathy and affection as any others—that the facts in this little book are recorded.

Indeed, it is not condescension, it is not patronage, it is not gifts which the poor man craves at our hands. He loves to be treated as a brother, and he especially appreciates our *respect*.

To toil all day, and every day, unknown, uncared for, unloved, who could stand it and not get his spirit crushed? Who could bear it a life long, and not feel hard thoughts rise within him occasionally against the rich man, who, exempted from the like cares, seems utterly regardless of his poorer neighbour?

Let the artisan or labourer once feel that the true heart of a brother or a sister beats for him in some of the more favoured classes of this country, and there will be opened to him at least one source of rich enjoyment in the interchange of kind feelings and acts of friendship, to which, by the yearnings of their common humanity, he is entitled; and the axe will be laid at the root of some of those debasing pleasures which hold him in thrall.

A lady said to me some months ago, "But you will make *chartists* of the lower classes! Are you not laying aside distinctions of rank in your intercourse with them?"

To this charge, a beautiful and true reply may be given in the words of one of the working-men* spoken of in this little book, to whom the question was inadvertently put, "Are not the game-laws severe?"

"You see, ma'am, it's right and fit there should be different classes. There must be them who serve and them who rule; and the working-man ought to be the last to wish it otherwise, for it is for his good; and it's a cheering thought that in this country a poor man can better his condition if he will, and provide for his children being higher than he was. Them game-laws are severe, but not a bit too much so; for if a rich man have got property, he have as much right to have it kept safe as the poor man have to his little. And if he goes to the expense of preserving his game, and of paying a gamekeeper, it's as much his right to have them game protected by the law as anything else he's got. Poaching leads to everything bad; for if a man don't regard *man's* law, he don't regard *God's* law—you may be sure for that! If a poacher's out all night, and chance to catch nothing, he won't go away empty; he'll take a fowl, or a lamb, or something else he oughtn't to."

Such is my experience of the small claim to chartism which these honest-hearted working-men possess.

* Edward H —, the pointsman belonging to the Great Western Railway, who is named in this book as offering his services to me as district-visitor.

Are *we*, I ask, equally free from the imputation of pride of caste which we so justly blame in our sable brethren of the East?

The remark is often made, "The poor are such beggars, they only care for what they get from you." This is a very erroneous statement; and those who believe it, prove that they have never sought the right way to a poor man's heart. Of course there are base, sordid minds in all classes.

I am charged often with bribing the people, by those who never take the trouble to ask me any questions, or to inquire into the facts.

Whenever a working-man in our society appears in good Sunday clothes, it is imagined they have been given to him; whereas these self-reliant, honest men, by *total abstinence* from the ONE most fatal but besetting temptation—intoxicating drinks—after paying their debts, find themselves in a position to invest their next savings in a suit of Sunday clothes, and they invariably do so. A very important step, self-respect, is thus gained. And it may be well to name here, though it looks like anticipating the story, when I mentioned the charge of bribery to the men, Henry M——, one of them, answered, with honest indignation, "There's something in every Englishman born that goes against gifts, and all that sort of thing. We enjoy a thousand times more anything that we pay for ourselves. It's not pride, it's true English-heartedness. We don't,

WHEN WE'RE SOBER, like to impose on any one, least of all on one who is doing us so much good, such a kind lady as you are."

The idea of bribery arose, perhaps, from the promise made in the beginning of my work, by way of encouragement to the *total abstainers*, to add twopence in the shilling at the end of the year to any savings laid up by them in my hands. At that time, only two men had signed the pledge, and the formation of a society was not contemplated.

To the honour of the men I would mention, that the non-parishioners have declined the bonus, saying that they could not bear to be chargeable to me, it was enough for me to take the trouble of keeping their savings!

At this moment, although more than *one hundred pounds a-week* is being rescued from the monopoly of the publicans by our society, which now numbers upwards of 230 men, this money is not being hoarded; it is being spent upon the wives and families, in all sorts of necessities and comforts—the change in their homes evidencing to the sincerity and truthfulness of the men who have kept faithful to their principles.

It will be seen in the perusal of the following pages, that the working-men named are of various trades.

There are blacksmiths, whitesmiths, lead-millers, iron-moulders, nailors, tailors, shoemakers, railway officials of various grades, and some employed in making

the locomotives for the same ; also engine-drivers, firemen, stone masons, sawyers of wood and stone, bricklayers, labourers, butchers, barbers, tanners, dyers, tinplate-workers, carpenters, joiners, turners, fishmongers, clerks in various offices, millwrights, painters, waiters, &c. &c.

The form of Letters in which this little book appears, is caused by the fact that no time was left during the prosecution of the work for keeping a journal. In the full business of the daily visiting, &c., it was impossible to keep any continuous, steady account, and therefore none was attempted ; and, had it not been for the preservation of some of the letters written under the vivid impression of the facts when they occurred, the publication, especially of conversations, would have been out of the question.

It will be seen that the whole movement has been from the beginning a RELIGIOUS one. The teetotalism arose from the *necessity* of the case.

If, in the providence of God, it had been my lot to prosecute a like work in China, *total abstinence from opium* must have been used as the handmaid of the gospel.

It is appalling when we think of the ravages of war, and mourn over the thousands slain in battle.

But our loss in this respect in the Crimea and in India shrinks into insignificance when compared with the 60,000 DEATHS WHICH OCCUR ANNUALLY in Great Britain alone from the effects of strong drink.

Is not this fact sufficient to arouse all who love their Saviour to come forward, heart and hand, to drive the demon of drunkenness from our native land? Shall we continue the folly of licensing houses which tempt our brothers and sisters to drink themselves into a state of brutal ferocity; and then build lunatic asylums, jails, and work-houses, thus "dealing with the *effects*, whilst we leave the *cause* alone," as John T——, a working-man of strong common sense, one day shrewdly observed.

Shall we allow it to be said that throughout England and Wales there is one house for the sale of intoxicating drinks to every thirty-one other houses—that is, one to every forty-six males above fifteen years of age? Yet this is a fact.

In a letter, dated July 27, 1859, addressed to a London paper by a "Jail Chaplain," I find these words, which I venture to transcribe verbatim:—

"Excessive competition drives the publican to all sorts of ingenious and infamous devices to attract custom to his house. The old poacher says, 'The more snares the more hares'—the more pitfalls the more victims.

"'It is manifest,' says the late able chaplain of Preston Jail, 'that the amount of crime in a county mainly depends on the number of low drinking-houses which are suffered to infest it;' and Archdeacon Gar-

bett, speaking of beer-shops, says,—‘ I have seen schools excellently managed, the most regular cottage visiting, the most heart-searching preaching, all, *so far as the labourer and cottager are concerned,** thrown away on *this rock.*’

“The clergy everywhere are discouraged, cast down, almost driven to despair, through the universal prevalence of intemperance, and the temptations that are multiplied for its encouragement, on every hand, *under the protection of law.* It thwarts, defeats, and nullifies their Christian schemes and philanthropic efforts to such an extent, that it is becoming a matter of grave question whether infidelity, religious indifference, and social demoralisation be not making head against us, in defiance of all our churches, our clergy, our Scripture-readers, and our schools.

“It is vain to expect parliament to deal effectively with this gigantic evil in the present state of public opinion. The country must take up the question vigorously first. I am afraid two-thirds of the House of Commons would not touch the question with a pair of tongs if they could help it; and is this to be wondered at, when we find that, in not a few places, the proportion of retailers of intoxicating drinks having

* Will any clergyman in England shew us that the working-men in his parish attend any place of worship? One here and there may do so, but, *as a class*, have they got hold of them at all? and if not, is not *drink* the cause?

votes, to the entire list of voters, is more than twenty per cent., without taking into account the enormous political influence of the large brewers?

"However bad the present state of things may be, it is not, to my mind at least, so painful and discouraging as *the general apathy of the clergy as regards this question*. So long as this continues, any effectual remedy is simply hopeless.

"Let us bear in mind that, if the law possesses but little power in compelling to do good; its influence, when wisely directed, is immense in restraining from evil. And surely it falls within its legitimate province to surround the people with circumstances that are conducive to good, and to remove, as far as possible, those which are provocatives to evil.

"The gospel alone, it is true, can regenerate society, but *God has left the task of removing external hindrances in our hands*; and we may as well expect to gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, as to expect a people to be orderly, temperate, and religious whom the law has beset with the seductions and stimulants of vice."

At a time when public attention is especially directed to the grave subject of our national defences, and our statesmen are in earnest deliberation about the possibility of an invasion, I would ask, Why is not more interest taken in the *social* and *moral* condition of the

men who compose our militia? Would it not be worth while to exercise some influence over them which might tell upon their leisure hours; and at the close of their month's drill, on the day they are paid up, will no one feel sufficient interest in them to be at the trouble to get up something in the form of a social meeting or pleasure trip, by way of innocent recreation, apart from the seductions of vice and the temptations to drunkenness which especially surround those who are billeted at public-houses? I mention this simply from noticing what occurred in our own town. With the exception of the few men who were in my * society, nearly all the rest of the militia-men, on being paid off, had recourse to drinking-houses, until not one street but several were roused by the disturbances caused through their drunkenness; and on the following morning several men sold the stockings off their feet, and the shirts from their backs, *to get more drink!* "I've been beset this morning," said a shoemaker the day after, "by mothers coming from the country to know what's become of their sons; and there's fifteen of them 'listed in a fit of desperation, all owing to their not having anything decent left to stand in! Now, a few shillings only would have took the whole lot of 'em home."

* These men had to stand their ground in the midst of no ordinary trial from jeering, &c. The extreme heat of the weather during their drill must also be taken into consideration. Which were the braver men?

If these are the men who are to defend us, will they not sell their country without remorse or shame for a pint of brandy? Has the claim of a *mother*, a *wife*, or *child* any hold over a man when influenced by drink? "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." (Prov. xxv. 28.) These are grave *facts*, and worth thinking about seriously.

CHAPTER I

Plenty of Work.

"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white
already to harvest."

"ST ALKMOND'S VICARAGE, *January 15, 1858.*

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—You will wonder what I have been doing this long time. The fact is, we have just at present many sick amongst our people, and several of these cannot live long. I am, and have been, therefore, particularly busy, doing what I can amongst them. Two of those, on their death-beds, interest me especially : the one is our sexton, a man sixty-nine years of age ; the other is a woman who has been our church cleaner for many years—she once took the treble part in our choir. Dearest Caroline, these death-bed scenes make me more in earnest for those in health.

I am resolved to begin at once an earnest and loving work amongst our dear people, TO MAKE A BUSINESS OF IT, and to devote myself, God helping me, wholly and heartily to the one thing—WINNING SOULS FOR CHRIST AND GLOEBY. Who knows what the result may be !

We have no idea, impotent as we are in ourselves, what we may and can do, if we will only try, in the strength God has laid up for us in Christ.

The fact is, our beloved M——'s death has roused me to be up and doing. It has bound me by so strong a tie of gratitude to God for the mercy shewn me in saving *his* soul, that I feel more than ever I did *henceforth I am no longer my own*. I am resolved, by His grace, to spend the rest of my life in winning souls to Christ.

I wrote to dearest Mary —— the other day, to ask her prayers, and to tell her my purpose,—that wonderful book, 'English Hearts and English Hands,' having opened up a new idea to me *in the method* of working; I will tell you and her how I get on, from time to time.

I wrote a few days ago to Mrs ——, to ask her prayers also, and to enlist her sympathies in my work. Her answer almost made me cry. She seemed afraid I was going to begin something beyond my province, and she gave me a caution (2 Sam. xviii. 22), lest I should run before I had a message ready. Was I sure that I was '*fit* for the work?'

I know she meant it most kindly; but, except for the strong desire which could not be quenched, I could almost have felt discouraged. So I burnt her letter, lest, taking it up at some future time, when pressed by trial, it might damp my spirits.

I have often thought what a mercy it is that success does not depend on our *fitness*, nor even on our *capabilities*. Our heavenly Father can supply all our

need, both mental and physical, out of the riches of His grace in Christ Jesus ; and in His skilful hands no instrument, however foolish in itself, can be useless. Indeed, if we would only believe it, more depends on Him than on ourselves. What encouragement, then, have we to come and receive out of His fulness ! And *this*, God helping me, I am resolved to do, and to be *discouraged by nothing !*

I ventured to mention my intention to one other lady, a hearty Christian. To my surprise, she seemed much in the same mind as Mrs ———, only she added one more element of trouble—‘ You must expect disappointments.’ ‘ No,’ I answered, ‘ I PRAY for God’s blessing, and shall *expect it*. That I shall *have some* disappointment, is no doubt certain ; but I will never *expect* it, for expectation involves *looking out for it*.’ Thus, dearest Caroline, I stand. God teaches me at the outset to rest on no props, but to trust *Him* for the *truthfulness of His promise*, and to *act upon it* Ever your loving sister,

JULIA.”

TO THE AUTHOR OF “ ENGLISH HEARTS AND ENGLISH
HANDS.”

“ ST ALKMOND’S VICARAGE, *January 23, 1858.*

MY DEAR ——— ———,—I have read, and re-read
‘ English Hearts and English Hands ’ with *thrilling*

interest, and feel stirred up to follow your example heartily, but amongst a totally different set of people.

In our old town nearly all the butchers used to reside together, in a narrow street called Double Butcher Row. The masters have mostly moved out into Pride Hill, a street which is also in our parish ; but several of the men employed by them still reside in the Row. Forty-three families occupy this street, which is very narrow. When I took it for my district, as visitor, I went one Sunday afternoon to every house, to ascertain how many persons attended any place of worship ; and found, to my dismay, that six individuals alone did so. I effected no good amongst them in the better observance of the Sunday ; and I believe it was chiefly owing to my having never tried to get at the *men*. My health was then very bad—a very little fatigued me, especially in a place where the air was not good. Also, I was often obliged to be away from home for two or three months at a time for change of air. Nevertheless, we had some most lovely characters in that uncouth place, and witnessed several most precious death-beds ; but these were chiefly lodgers, occupants of single rooms.

I longed often to get at the men ; but it seemed, in my ignorance, impossible for a woman to be able to do so, unless at a death-bed, for I never imagined it possible to go out alone after dusk, especially from house to house amongst the poor.

We have had several excellent district-visitors for Double Butcher Row since I was obliged, by utter loss of health, to give it up ; but now we are without one. And as God has given me back my health and strength in a degree which I never expected, I am earnestly desirous to begin there amongst *our men* such a work as you have carried on amongst the navvies. for the love of Christ.

The public-houses and beer-houses will be my chief hindrance, the landlords lay such snares and plots to catch the wages of the working-men.

I want to know whether you asked the men to sign the pledge? As no mention is made of it, I gather that you only led them *by principle* to refrain from drinking—by ‘praying hard’ when they passed a ‘public.’

Do you think I shall put a stumbling-block before our men if I ask them to sign the pledge for six months, during which time I would follow them up with kindness and religious instruction, and establish a cottage-reading or prayer-meeting?

I ask this because, before teetotalism entered my head, a poor woman beckoned me to her house when I was coming from the sick-bed of our sexton, a butcher aged 69, and earnestly entreated me to get her husband to sign the pledge. Her house looked most desolate—no fire, hardly any furniture in her kitchen. I called several times during the following week, in hopes of

finding the man at home. On Sunday last I was successful; he was alone, upstairs, having gone to lie down. On hearing me knock at the door, he came down, leading a little child by the hand.

Feeling embarrassed, I hardly knew how to begin my errand; so I came to the point at once, saying, in a gentle voice, 'O Mr D——, will you sign the pledge?'

He looked excessively thankful, and seemed ready to throw himself at my feet for speaking so kindly. He confessed that drink made him mad and brutal, and caught at the idea of the pledge so earnestly that I felt unhappy lest he was depending on it as a saviour.

'There is no strength given by signing, my friend; the pledge is not Christ. You must get strength from *Him* to keep you from temptation.'

'Yes, but I shall have an answer to give when they want me to drink, if I sign it.'

It saddens me to think what snares and temptations to intemperance surround our working-men. What scorn and derision they have to endure, if they resolutely withstand!

My husband wishes me to go at nights amongst the people, when the men are at home from their work.

My first 'reading' will take place, God willing, at three o'clock to-morrow, [Sunday,] as we have no service at that hour.

Charles tried open-air preaching every Sunday during the last two summers, conducted alternately by

himself and curate. They took their position in the place where the three figures stand in the accompanying picture.* The novelty attracted the people out of their houses the first few Sundays; gradually they disappeared, and never came even to the doors or windows again; and eventually a respectable audience was attracted from various parts of the town, who regularly attend church or chapel. So these services were discontinued.

Last winter, November 1856, a young butcher, our parishioner, named Bromley, was killed by a man, more or less under the influence of drink, in a crowd that had been collected in the Market Square by the playing of a band of music at the unseasonable hour of eleven at night. This event caused a great sensation amongst the people. It is too long a story to tell now. After the funeral, my husband gave a solemn address in the churchyard, as he noticed there were a large number of butchers' men present whom he had never seen in church before. The opportunity was too precious to be lost. He told them, in conclusion, there should be a special service for them at three o'clock on the following Sunday afternoon. They seemed much impressed by his address; and, to our great comfort, between two and three hundred persons, *chiefly men*, attended that service on the following Sunday. They were placed in pews. There was hardly one of those

* See Frontispiece.

rough, strange-looking men who did not weep during the fervent appeal made to them. We sang,

‘There is a fountain fill’d with blood.’

I saw many sit down with their faces buried in their handkerchiefs. I was so affected I could not sound a note. To our great disappointment there were not ten of these men who ever came again to church, although notice was given that the service should be continued at that same hour every Sunday. The services were eventually given up as a failure. I see, now, if we had followed up the people; but it is no use to make vain regrets. The men are still here; I believe they are all living. It is evident they have not blunted every feeling. They have yet a soft place in their hearts. I forgot to say, when that first special service took place, my husband asked all those who wished to become members of a reading-room and night-school, to give their names to him in the vestry. Twenty-five men came forward, and the night-school was started immediately; but it, also, proved a failure. I believe only two or three of these men attended. The rest who came were young lads from all parts of the town, chiefly from other parishes, whose object seemed to be diversion rather than improvement; so the night-school was given up.

Now, dear — —, I have written chiefly to enlist your prayers for me in the work I am emboldened to begin through your example. Also, I wish to ask your advice on the subject of signing the pledge as a

help against drunkenness. Teetotalism is a thing I have always hated. But what am I to do? The men tell me they cannot stop at the first half-pint—they cannot drink moderately. If I prevent its being a *stumbling-block*,—that is, a thing to be depended upon instead of Christ as their salvation and strength,—shall I err in listening to the entreaties of the women to get their husbands to sign the pledge?

In ancient times, when St Alkmond's was a collegiate church, the Abbot used to reside in Butcher Row. In the reign of Stephen, the monastic revenues being diverted, the church ceased to be collegiate. In later times, I am told it was the residence of some of our county families; now, only poor people reside there. There are several inhabited passages, with slaughter-houses at the end of them; and worse still, three public-houses and a beer-house stand in this street, and this, remember, where only forty-three families reside! What wonder that the people in this place are noted for quarrelling, fighting, and drinking!

I have become very much interested in our sexton, who is on his death-bed in one of these passages. He has been a heavy drinker, and is not prepossessing in manner. He was a strong, powerful man till a couple of years ago, when his health broke down, and Charles visited him. I trust he is now heartily convinced of sin, and sincerely repentant. The name of Jesus lights up his dull, glassy eyes with glory, and even in his

sleep he names His blessed name with fervour. His daughter tells me that she can hear him praying when she is down stairs—his room is two storeys above. I think I have seen him for the last time to-day, yet he rallied when I spoke of Jesus.

If you can spare time, it will be so very kind of you to give me advice on the subject of the total abstinence pledge. Another man, named Richard Stedman, has signed, at the earnest request of his dying wife, made through me. I think God must have a purpose of mercy for these poor men in Butcher Row. For none have we ever prayed so earnestly; but until your '*English Hearts and English Hands*' *lighted up a new idea*, we seemed powerless. May God bless that book to every one who reads it, and may He specially bless you for stirring us up to live more to His glory! *Amen.*—I am, dear ———, yours most sincerely,

JULIA B. W."

Dr M.* most kindly and promptly replied to this letter, entreating me by all means to try the total abstinence pledge, and assuring me that it might prove most beneficial if rightly used. He also told me that it had been very successfully used for six months at a time amongst some of the navvies who resided in Beckenham and its neighbourhood.

* The venerated father of the Author of "*English Hearts and English Hands*."

CHAPTER II.

How it was Begun.

“Treat men gently, trust them strongly, if thou wish their weal;
Or cautious doubt and bitter thoughts will tempt the best to foil
thee.

Believe the well in sanguine hope, and thou shalt reap the better;
But if thou deal with men so ill, thy dealings make them worse.
Despair not of some gleams of good still lingering in the darkest,
And among veterans in crime, plead thou as with their children;
So astonished at humanities, the bad heart long estranged
Shall even weep to feel itself so little worth thy love;
In wholesome sorrow will he bless thee; yea, and in that spirit
may repent;
Thus, wilt thou gain a soul, in mercy given to thy faith.”

"January 27, 1858.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—On Sunday last, the 24th, I began my first reading at the house of a bricklayer in Butcher Row. Feeling very nervous about it, I did not venture to invite any one to attend, except one or two who live in the same passage.

About six persons were present; altogether, it was less formidable than I expected. We got on most beautifully with the hymn, and I felt greatly comforted in having made this first step.

Next day, in going to see Robert Wilding, the sexton, E——, the sweep, asked me if I meant to have a meeting every Sunday—I suppose he heard our singing. He then offered me the use of his kitchen, saying, 'It's the largest in Butcher Row; and if you'll accept of it, I will scrape the walls, whitewash them, and get it clean by next Sunday.' Was not this encouraging?"

TO THE AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH HEARTS AND ENGLISH
HANDS."

.
"Robert Wilding, the sexton, breathed his last on

Monday, a few hours after I was with him. His dying words were, 'Jesus! my God, my God, help me!' Beautiful appropriation!

I have had a room lent me by a coachmaker for Tuesday evenings, eight o'clock. We met at a butcher's last Tuesday; six men and five women attended. Was it not pretty well for the first time, on a week-night, as I was too timid to let many people know about it? I also began a reading on Sunday at three o'clock, at a bricklayer's house."

" February 6.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—We met at E——'s, the sweep, on Sunday, and found him true to his word—the room in wonderful order for my reception, so clean and nice. To my great satisfaction, on entering, I found a good gathering of people; they had brought their chairs and stools, camp fashion, and were quietly awaiting my arrival. My subject was 1 John iii. 1–3. To get hold of an audience who never attend any place of worship, was it not a precious opportunity to speak of God's love in Christ? The words, 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God,' did indeed seem invested with wonderful glory. I could hardly get on for emotion. I saw J. D—— wipe away a tear, and heard a choking sound proceed from A——. As we all knelt in prayer, it was almost too much for me,

the men looked so solemnised as they walked out of the room ; eight married women were present.

On Tuesday, Feb. 2, at eight o'clock in the evening, I met the people at R——'s house. It was bitterly cold, the snow thawing, all slippery under foot. There were present twenty-five persons. I took for my subject, 'I am the resurrection and the life,' making the glorious hope of resurrection-glory a strong plea for living to God. It was touching to see those men, some of whom I knew to be drunkards, listening to God's truth with profound attention, especially when Christ's claim to *the whole man, body, soul, and spirit*, was urged ; and it was pressed upon them that our bodies must not be defiled by drunkenness, uncleanness, or any other impurity, for 'we are bought with a price,' &c. The solemn tone of the meeting was most striking. We sang, 'Come, Holy Spirit,' in which all joined heartily.

Next day, I heard that A—— and B—— worked five miles off, starting at five o'clock daily, and getting home tired by half-past seven. It touched me to think of these men having come to the eight-o'clock reading without my asking them. I took an early opportunity of calling at their homes at night, to tell them I thought much of their attending under such circumstances. B—— looked 'right proud' to see me—'If you had them meetings every night, I'd come.' He spoke of his own accord of his habit of drinking on his pay-nights.

‘Well, I know your temptations are many, but take heart—let the past suffice. “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” If you will come heartily to Christ, His blood will wipe all the past away, and for ever.’ I then recommended the pledge—‘Will you sign it to please me?’

‘Oh no! I can’t do that; but yet I believe if I did, it would be a good job for me, it would save me six or seven pounds a-year, or more than that.’

‘What a shame, my friend, that the publicans should swallow up so much of your honest earnings! What do they care for you?’

‘Nothing at all,’ said his wife, who had remained hitherto silent; ‘I wanted a drop of barm the other day, and for all they get so much out of him, not a drop would they let me have, just because I hadn’t the pence at hand! I do think that was shameful.’

I asked B—— if he had ever read ‘The Fool’s Pence.’

‘Yes; and it’s a very true tract.’

I again spoke of the pledge, adding, however, ‘Now, my friends, I don’t attach any importance to it as giving strength, or supplying a motive, but it is useful as an excuse for refusing drink when you are treated to it; *do* try it, if only for six months.’

‘Well, I don’t say that I won’t, but I will think on’t. Will you please to call again soon, ma’am, about it?’

‘Oh yes, gladly.’

As I was leaving, he added, ‘Well, if I sign the pledge, and keep it six months, I’ll never touch a drop of their stuff no more, I promise you, ma’am.’”

[It is due to B—— to mention that he did sign, a few days after, and still continues faithful to his promise.]

When I called at A——’s house, his wife feigned an errand, and vanished with her children, winter’s night though it was, for the sake of leaving me alone with her husband. He had been a very great drinker and fighter for years, a tall, strong, powerful man. The youngest child ran back from her mother, crying; I held out my arms, so she climbed my knees and soon nestled herself to her heart’s content, whilst I spoke to her father about Christ, and the glorious future in store for those who come heartily to Him, and learn of Him to forsake sin. I told him that our salvation hinged on our doing so—that our past sins may be all washed away in His blood, if we would but come, and He would give us strength for the future to live differently. He was very subdued and gentle, listened with interest, and spoke as if he felt what he said.

Next day his wife said to me, ‘Oh, ma’am, he cried so last night, and talked after he was in bed, and again afore he went to work this morning, and said, “She was

so kind ; it's them kind words of hers that's got over me—she spoke to me as if she wanted me to be saved. I'll go to church on Sunday morning, and to her meeting at three o'clock, and again to church at night—I will." But I said to him, "Oh, A——, but your Sunday clothes is in pawn ;" and he said, "Then I'll get them out on pay-night."

I lifted up my heart in thankfulness for this fresh instance of His presence and blessing."

A—— kept his word. On the 10th he took me by surprise, by accompanying B—— to sign the pledge ; and, on receiving his wages, he paid 10s. 6d. to get his Sunday clothes out of pawn, and to my great satisfaction appeared at church for *morning* service.

" February 14, 1858.

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—I am so full of thankfulness ! Charles W——, R——, and A——, to my certain knowledge, came to church twice yesterday, and to my reading also. The beadle told Charles that 'six on um were at church.' It may be so, for they are so shy ; they sit where nobody can notice them ; but these three I saw myself, and M—— I saw at night in church. At my reading there were nine married and one single man, and eleven women, chiefly wives. I was so much in earnest that they caught the feeling ; and when we began the hymn, not a man could sing

till the third verse—they were choking to keep down tears. You should have seen them to understand me. I could hardly get on. In prayer, I could not help praying specially for dear Sarah Stedman, who is much worse. When Richard Stedman was leaving the room, he gave me such an earnest look of gratitude, his face red with weeping. Dear Richard Stedman! he is an old friend. We have known him many years—he was such a hard drinker during a good portion of that time, alas! During the last five years he has improved in that respect, and has been our bass singer ever since I took the management of the choir. He signed the pledge at his wife's request, made through me, on January 20. I shall never forget that half-hour in our dining-room, the first I ever had alone with him. I believe it was the turning-point in his life. When I urged his wife's dying request on him, how he cried! It was a great struggle to do as she wished in that one particular. A child might lead that man, he has such a tender, affectionate spirit.

I saw his wife again last evening, after church. She again gave me a fervent blessing, as I knelt beside her repeating texts of Scripture and scraps of hymns.

'Oh, I shall bless you through eternity; you first put me in the way!'

'No, do not bless me; bless and praise Jesus Christ; He died for you. I am but a poor sinner like yourself, only an instrument in His hands.'

‘But *you did* first put me in the way, and I shall bless you and rejoice with you at His right hand for ever. I was contented with myself; and you told me to pray for the Holy Spirit to shew me what a sinner I was; and I did pray, and he shewed me Jesus; and *then* I knew what a vile sinner I had been—how I had gone regular to church, but never prayed, or taken heed to sermons. Oh, I might as well never have gone, for the good it did me; but He has washed my sins all away in His blood.’ She added, after pausing to rest, ‘I shall so welcome you when you come to heaven.’

Dearest Caroline, this is the second death-bed this year where God has blessed my word. I feel so terrified when a person feels at peace independently of Christ; it must be a false peace then. Charles W——’s father seemed to me in this state when first I saw him; but I have the assurance that he too came heartily to the Saviour for salvation. How it humbles one to the dust when God uses us for His glory!

I have a great deal of work on hand—more hearts to win; and to keep up, if they will let me, a gentle influence amongst those who now attend the meetings. They say a lady can manage a rough horse better than a man. Perhaps it may be the same with these men, for, rough as they seem, the **VERY GENTLEST** influence tells most on them—it melts and wins them. It is remarkable that I have never said one word to them

about coming to church. Had I done so, I know they would never have come. I have only spoken at every step of God's love in Christ, and this has been blessed—not my words, but *God's truth* has done it. A—— has such a dear little child, nearly three years old ; she watches for me, and always gets on my knees if she can, nestles herself in my arms, and rests her cheek against mine.

As Hugh Stowell is to give a lecture next Tuesday night in the Lion Room to the Young Men's Christian Association, on 'The End and Aim of Life,' I have altered my meeting to another evening, in order that the people may be able to attend the lecture. We are to dine at W—— to meet Mr Stowell.—Ever your loving sister,

JULIA."

CHAPTER III.

The Power of Sympathy.

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice,
And weep with them that weep."

"All worldly joys go less
To the one joy of doing kindnesses."

" *March 10.*

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—We are just returned from the cemetery, where we have left the body of dear Sarah Stedman to rest in peace till the day of Christ. Oh, such a piercing north-east wind!—snow scattered over the country. The walks in the cemetery were well swept and dry. This is the first funeral I have attended there. I said to Charles, 'Oh, if I were leaving *you* all alone there this cold bitter day, I should never lift up my face again.' Richard Stedman burst out at the reading of the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. He wept all the while, and sobbed.

It was so touching of Stedman. He brought me yesterday all the bills for the funeral, ready paid and receipted; likewise those for his own and children's mourning, and asked me to keep them for him, together with £2, saying, 'I had £9 from my club to bury my missus,' and then he sobbed. After a bit, he went on to say, 'This £2 is the balance left, for you to keep towards my rent.' It went to my heart to see him so cut up. Was it not humble of him? I felt thankful for his

confidence. It will give me a hold over him for good. I am so glad he looks upon me as a sincere old friend. I have seen so much of his sorrow lately, poor fellow, and have entered so truly into his grief.

I like this weather amazingly, except it makes me feel so sorry for the poor. A—— is ill ; Ellen has just taken him some broth, strong and good. God bless you both.—Ever your loving sister, JULIA."

"MONDAY, *March 1.*

We awoke upon a snowy scene ; the labourers and bricklayers were unable to work. We thought this a good opportunity to encourage the men who had regularly attended my readings by giving them a little treat in the form of a social supper. Twelve names were accordingly put down ; of these only six had then signed the pledge. Whilst we were making our plans, Mrs —— called with her husband's watch. 'He sets great store by this watch, ma'am ; if you will lend him 10s. on it, he would like to sign the pledge to-day, but he can't otherwise, for he says he must first pay off what he has borrowed for drink. You see, ma'am, when he's short of money, he borrows sixpence off one, two shillings off another, and so on. They all lend willingly, for they know he'll pay them all back. He can't bear to sign teetotal till he gets this straight.' Of course, I took the watch and paid the money. [It was called for, and the money returned to me the same

week.] I called on —— a few hours after this transaction, and found him ‘very comfortable like,’ having paid all his debts. At his request, I knelt down and prayed with him that he might have grace given him to keep from his besetting sin, and to cleave to Jesus with his whole heart. He then signed the pledge. ‘For how long do you sign?’ ‘*For life*, I trust.’”

The subsequent history of this man is most touching. He had suffered dreadfully at times from *delirium tremens*, and was subject to fits of depression. In one of these, some time after signing the pledge, he was sorely tempted to break it; but he betook himself to prayer, and so long as he continued to do this, he held out firmly. At last, one Friday he became so low and desponding that he could not bear it any longer. He suddenly went out, telling his wife, “I shall only be out half-an-hour.” Without any fixed plan, he went to the railway station, and seeing a train ready to start, he took a ticket to ——, about fifty miles off, and stayed there till the following Tuesday, when he came home much better, and without having broken the pledge. Some weeks after, he had a similar attack, but unhappily started off to a liquor-vault, and came home very much intoxicated. This did not continue long. Hopeless as the case seemed, he returned, signed again, and still continues on my list, a true man and a sincere, humble Christian, never absenting himself

from any means of grace, and, what is very remarkable, having no return of those low desponding attacks.

“ *March 13, 1858.*

DEAREST CAROLINE,—Owing to the death and funeral of Sarah Stedman, our supper for the men was delayed till Monday. They arrived punctually at eight o'clock P.M. The teetotallers were placed to my right and left. A charming button-hole bouquet of snowdrops, tied with green ribbon, was laid on each plate (a hint taken from the Beckenham *tea-drinkings* for the navvies). No gentlemen could have conducted themselves better than these men did. There were cold meats, mashed potatoes, bread and butter, cake, tea and coffee. After the table was cleared, we were amazed to find the cloth unsullied by a single spot. We then amused the men by shewing them some pictures, ‘Rattray’s Affghan Scenes,’ ‘The Phenomena of Nature,’ published by the Christian Knowledge Society, &c. My husband and his curate addressed them afterwards. We sang a hymn; and at ten o’clock, when we separated, each man had a currant cake given him for his children. The next day I called, according to promise, at all their homes, to give them tickets of admission to a lecture on ‘Sir Thomas More,’ by Mr Vince. Nearly all the men were at work, but the remarks made about the preceding evening by the wives, amused and gratified us much.

One said to me, ‘O ma’am, Thomas never was so happy in all his life ; he was as much at home, he said, as ever he felt in any public-house.’

Old Mr G—— said, ‘Well, it was for all the world like our Saviour eating with publicans and sinners, to see Mr W—— and Mr and Mrs L—— and you sit along with such a rough set on us, as we been ; and some on us such desperate wicked uns till quite lately.’

Another said, ‘It surpassed all my expectations. I thought, we shall have to leave as soon as we’ve eaten our suppers in the kitchen ; but to be asked into the *parlour*, and to have Mrs L—— and you to sit down with us, as well as the gentlemen—there, *I* call that true humility.’

Mrs B—— said to me, ‘And *ours* [her husband] said to me, no one could be off singing, you played so beautiful ; it was for all the world like a little organ.’
.....—Your affectionate sister, JULIA.”

" March 20, 1858.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—You will be glad to hear that Charles W——, son of our late sexton, whose death-bed I took such an interest in, signed the pledge on the 10th. I have a hearty respect for him, he is such a straightforward, sensible, kind-hearted man. He is thirty-seven years of age, and has a good wife (I wish I could say the same for all the others) and five nice children. I have been in their house on an evening, when business had called out both parents, and found the children sitting round the table as orderly and well-behaved as any gentleman's children, with a candle burning, amusing themselves with slate, books, work, and toys. Charles W—— is a butcher, or rather a *slaughter-man*. He has a large business, as he is almost the only one in the town on his own account, and kills for most of the farmers round here. To give you an idea of his temptations to drink, he told me when I asked him six weeks ago if he would sign the pledge, 'Yes, ma'am, if it will do to promise that I'll never spend my own money in drink ; but I *must* take

what I am offered in business, or I should offend my employers, and lose by it.'

'How much have you a chance of getting a-day?'

'Sometimes ten, fourteen, or twenty pints—it depends on the time of year; I get quite as much as twenty occasionally.'

'And do you mean to say you drink all that?'

'Why, it wouldn't do to refuse, ma'am—it would look so.'

'But in the meantime you will get to *love* the drink, and be unable to do without it; and another thing is certain, you will not be contented five years hence with what you take now, so it will end in your spending your own money, and making matters bad at home.'

'Oh no; I shall never do that.'

'You don't *mean* to do it, I know; but it will come gradually before you are aware of it. Don't you take more now than you used to do two years ago?'

He looked grave, and said, 'Yes, a good drop more.'

'Oh, DO STOP, I beseech you! You have such a good wife, Charles, for her sake do make a stand.'

'Indeed, I'll never spend my own money over it, but I cannot be so rude to my employers as to refuse what they allow; besides, they'll not give me money for it, and so it will be a loss.'

'No, I deny that; better throw the drink into the

Severn, and lose the money, than get the drunkard's thirst upon you : if once you get that, it may be too late to mend.'

This conversation stuck by him. Without saying a word to anybody, he from that moment resolutely refused every drop of beer or spirits, and after a month's trial he signed the pledge, saying, 'I was afraid of signing before, lest I should break it, and I wouldn't have treated *you* so for anything ; so I thought it would be best first to see if I could do it, and I find I can.' You may be sure I was right thankful.*

There is a clean, hard-working, little woman in our parish who has just had her fifth child. I have been visiting her whilst she was laid by. One day her husband was at home ; I had never seen him before, though I have known and visited *her* for years. I was surprised to find him so gentle and pleasing ; I have only heard of him as a drinking, fighting man. He is tall, fair, with light hair, and, I am sure, has naturally a most loving, tender disposition. What a shame that drink should transform such an one into a fiend ! He signed a few days ago to please his wife, who urged it in my presence. To-day, he brought me an Irishman who works with him ; but, on questioning him, I found he did not belong to our parish, so I refused to have him, saying, with a smile, that I had no idea of turn-

* It is satisfactory to state that Charles W—— bids fair to continue firm to his life's end. He is now my head man.

ing poacher! that we had plenty to do amongst our own people without going further, and meddling with the work of another clergyman. However, William L—— overruled me in this matter. He said, with the most serious earnestness, ‘O ma’am, and because he doesn’t live in our parish, must he go on drinking? There’s no one comes in of nights when he is at home from work to visit him and the other men; oh, surely you would have him to go to heaven as well as we!’ I could not withstand this appeal, which ought to have been *heard* to be fully entered into. Philip G—— is a Roman Catholic, a particularly clean, tidy, little man, twenty-seven years of age. I am sure, by his very appearance, that he must have a good wife.”

Up to this moment it will be seen that no woman had signed the pledge. The change was most satisfactory in the men who had done so, but I trembled for them lest the wives should unsettle them by their daily half-pints. There were also several drinking women, whose husbands were strangers to me. I longed to gain an influence over *them*. On Sunday, the 21st March, I therefore signed the pledge myself in my husband’s presence; and on the following Tuesday night I told the people at the meeting that I had done so, to their great astonishment.

"April 16.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—The small-pox is raging amongst the children in Butcher Row. One has died, and several are ill, amongst whom is A——'s youngest child, such a pretty little fairy, the one I have named to you before as being so fond of me. For thirteen days she has continued ill as possible. It is a loathsome disease, and has so changed her appearance, poor little darling—she will certainly die. I pray it may be blessed to the parents, who doat on her—the father especially.

What do you think! Stedman has had his temperance card (the one I give after a month's consistency) framed and hung up in his room! He brought it me first to shew it me; I felt much gratified. It looks as if he was not ashamed of his colours. He and the other total abstiners get dreadfully laughed at. Would you believe it, they cannot walk quietly to church without being shouted after, 'There go Mrs W——'s pupils!' And the enemies call B——, who used to be such a terror to the neighbourhood, 'one of Mrs W——'s lambs!' My meetings continue to increase."

A——'s child, named in the last letter, died the same evening. To sympathise fully in the parents' sorrow, I followed their darling to the grave. But it almost broke my heart afterwards to learn that A—— went to

drown his grief in drink that same night—not that he got tipsy, but he broke the pledge, and became from that time unsettled, so that he has never returned to do any good, and has left off coming to church.

It will be necessary here to enter into some personal details. It was at this time that I took the small-pox; and, for the encouragement of any ladies who may be engaged in a similar work, I would mention that I have attended all sorts of infectious diseases, before and since, without taking any complaint; and when, on this occasion, I was not so fortunate as to escape, it was overruled for good, and certainly tended to the establishment of my health and strength. I have enjoyed ever since, by the blessing of God, a degree of health and vigour quite unprecedented in my life. I was able to resume my full work six weeks from the day I was taken ill, and that without the aid of any stimulant; which is the more remarkable, because I had been for the last fourteen years so nervous and debilitated, that stimulants were considered necessary for me; and when I signed the pledge, all my friends told me that my constitution could not stand it. My present experience convinces me, that if I had followed the same course years ago, I should probably have seldom needed medical aid.* Stimulants, I believe,

* “Nevertheless, I deny not but that physicians are necessary, and greatly to be esteemed for the knowing and curing of diseases, *into which they often fall who live disorderly.*”—GEORGE HERBERT.

by the constant irritation to nerves and brain which they produce, only serve to perpetuate the weakness which they are intended to remedy.

Whilst on this subject, I will confess that the first six weeks in my total abstinence experience was very hard work, but I would not have been without this inconvenience for all the world. It made me enter, in my small measure, into the fellowship of THEIR trials for whose sake I made this little sacrifice, and it caused me to appreciate, better than I could otherwise have done, the brave self-denial and noble-hearted firmness of my honest, hard-working brothers, one of whom has since told me, "Indeed, ma'am, I didn't like to confess it at the time, but I did feel so terrible those first six weeks! I thought sometimes I must have died, but now I feel a degree of strength I never had in my life before. No one has a right to speak against total abstinence till he's given it a fair trial, and three months' isn't enough for that." This was said by Charles W——* sixteen months after he left off drinking!

There is always a rich compensation in all God's dealings with us. When He sends trials, there are corresponding alleviations. The six weeks' rest caused by my illness was a season of sweet enjoyment. Truly

* When it is stated that Charles W—— was one of the *early-morning spirit-drinkers*, his testimony becomes the more valuable, as well as his self-denial the more remarkable.

was the motto fulfilled which was lovingly sent me from Beckenham, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." There was full leisure to review my work from its small beginnings up to the present time, and to look steadily onwards, with hope and confidence, until the thought of its final issue in glory to many precious souls now become so dear to me almost overwhelmed me with a thrill of joy such as I shall never forget.

I spent those six weeks at my sister's. Feeling ill, yet not apprehending anything serious, I went there as usual for a few days' rest. Her loving care and gentle presence added greatly to my happiness. No fear of infection could keep her from my side, and, through God's mercy, she escaped unharmed.

CHAPTER V.

Shrewsbury Show.

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these ; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, . . . drunkenness, revellings, and such like : of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

“Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them ; for it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.”

I RETURNED home, June 4, just in time to fulfil a promise made to the men two months before to arrange a trip for Show-Monday.

"Let it be beyond the sound of the big drums and music," said Charles W——, "or I doubt whether we shan't lose some in our ranks."

"I can't understand how ever it was I used to enjoy that show," was Stedman's remark, looking very thoughtful as he spoke. "I'd go anywhere out of the way of it now; *it's nothing but drunkenness.*"

And then he told me that many a man, who had been going on "pretty tidy" for months, would "break out and have a spree" at the show, for a fortnight together,* drinking, to the utter neglect of his poor wife and children.

"I wish, Richard, those people who patronise the show by way of kindness to the working-classes, would just take the trouble to go about from house to house amongst you *the week after the show*, and ascertain for themselves what good it has done you."

* I have myself known men to continue their *spree* for ten weeks, beginning on Show-Monday.

“It would be a very good job if they would, ma’am.
I’ve seen too much sorrow from it.”

It is strange that in the face of facts, which it is very easy to get from the police reports,* the municipal authorities should still resolutely patronise a *fête* which is *now* not only utterly without meaning, but also known to be subversive of all morality. It has been stated to me by respectable old inhabitants, that hundreds of servant girls annually date their ruin from Shrewsbury Show ; the scenes of drunkenness and immorality are not to be named.

Is it not insane, when we talk of raising the lower classes, to expect that by such scenes of revelry and drunken mirth we can either refresh or benefit the toil-worn working-man, mentally or physically? Will no one believe the testimony of those who gladly give up their time to visiting the poor, and who know them individually, and heartily love them, that they, when sober and “in their right minds,” do not need or desire this kind of wild holiday—that they are thankful to avoid the occasions to drunkenness which it presents, and feel most grateful to any one who will be at the trouble of providing recreation for them in another form more worthy of the name, which really will refresh them in mind and body without exhausting their

* Since writing the above, I have ascertained that only the cases fined, or brought before the magistrates, are reported, so that they form no criterion of the amount of drunkenness.

strength, leaving a sting in their conscience, or robbing them of all their earnings?

But the truth is *the love of money*, not the love of the working-classes, lies at the root of the matter. It is a harvest-time for the publicans, and it is *they* who chiefly patronise the show, together with all who are engaged in the liquor-traffic here. The sum spent by a working-man during "a spree" is almost incredible. I have known men to spend from £6 to £20 in a few days; but it sometimes cost them their furniture or a suit of good clothing, as they had not so much in money. At the Shrewsbury Show, cheap monster trips bring thousands of working-men and others from "the black country," the "potteries," &c. It would be sadly interesting to know for a fact in what condition they for the most part return.

"The Day after 'the Show,'

June 9, 1858.

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—It has just struck nine. Charles is finishing breakfast, and now for my promised letter about our big trip to the Wrekin on Show-Monday. I never enjoyed anything so much in my life, except I longed so for you to have been with us. We had a glorious day. Though sunny, there was a fine breeze, which prevented fatigue. We went in two parties. Charles thought it his duty to wait for the second detachment, consisting of our school-children,

the teachers, the wives of my men, and some other friends. They started at one o'clock, and had a special train at reduced fares allowed them by the company, which train also took our *whole* party back at night. Mr and Mrs L—— (my husband's curate and his wife) joined me in our *first* party at ten o'clock; this consisted of my teetotallers and the young men belonging to Charles's Bible-class. We went by train to Wellington, and from thence took a fly to the foot of the Wrekin, which is, I think, three miles, and gave Richard Stedman and his little Willie a lift on the box-seat. The rest of the men walked. We dined all together on the hill, by permission of Mr and Mrs Herbert, at the cottage kept by Edwards, and then roved about until the other party arrived. It was a moment of great excitement when the waggons full of children and three flies came in sight. The children had their tea at 3.30, and the adults at 4.30. There was plenty of meat for the latter at tea left from dinner. After tea, it was so nice to see every man strolling about with his wife. A great many amusing things were said. My friend the Irishman, seeing me seated beside his wife under a large tree, came up with such a hearty smile, and exclaimed with enthusiasm, 'May you live for ever, and die happy!' Another man, watching with glee the mirth of his children at tea with big pieces of cake in their hands, said, 'This is better than any show, ma'am; more enjoyment in

it, *and nothing to be sorry for afterwards.*' The children enjoyed themselves to their hearts' content. One of the little ones, just before a race with her play-fellows, called out, 'Teacher, if I fall down hill and get killed, please tell mother I died happy.' On the summit of the hill we sang a hymn; it is a glorious spot for a song of praise!

On our return, as we were walking up Castle Street together, Charles and I were speaking with thankfulness of the happy issue of the day, that in so large a space for the children's ramble no child was missing—no accident had occurred to mar our complete happiness—Stedman called out to us to stop, and upon our turning round, my men, with one voice, made us a most grateful, hearty speech, thanking us for the happiest day they had ever spent in their lives! I assure you, dear Caroline, we parted, after shaking hands with each man, with tears in our eyes. Was it not beautiful of them? Some of them had never been so far from Shrewsbury before! The trip cost us altogether £12 (exclusive of the dinner), which was not a large sum, considering we were more than two hundred in number. I am sure Edwards, who keeps the cottage on the Wrekin, deserved our best thanks for the good arrangements he made for us. I had one sorrow at my heart in the midst of it all. I felt so grieved that W—— L—— could not be with us; but we had agreed that only those who kept the pledge should have the treat, and as he

had broken, it was necessary he should learn a lesson by this disappointment. He went to work that morning as usual, and passed the day quietly." . . .

"June 11, 1858.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—The Scripture-reader called just after my last letter to you was finished, and suggested that I should make some rules for my society. I struck them off hastily before the meeting, and we discussed and settled them. They are now being printed, and fixed to a card, on the back of which I have had the hymn affixed which I made for the men when I had the small-pox. They can hang up the card in their rooms. These lines always remind me of William L——. They were his experience before I left home, poor fellow. I know God will yet bring him back, though He has suffered him to fall, for he had begun to love his Saviour. It is good to be taught the evil of one's own heart, even by a deep humbling like his."

"AND YOU HATH HE QUICKENED," &c.

EPH. ii. 1-6.

MY FATHER!—I had wander'd long
 In paths of sin and shame,
 Nor felt a sorrow for the wrong
 I did Thy holy Name.

I walk'd with sinners, who were mad
To drown all thought in mirth ;
My restless heart was often sad ;
Such joy—what was it worth ?

I knew not Thou hadst lovéd me
With everlasting love,
Else I had surely clung to Thee,
And sought the joys above.

I knew not of the glorious hope
Of Resurrection Life ;
My narrow heart had only scope
For earth's mean care and strife.

But when Thy Holy Spirit broke
My sleep of sin and death,
I felt how hard was Satan's yoke,
His wages, endless death.

I saw my Saviour on the cross,
Bending beneath *my* guilt,
Earth's glories then were turn'd to dross,
For *me* His blood was spilt !

O Father ! my poor rebel heart
Then—not till then, was won ;
I felt, with Christ I'll take my part,
And in His footsteps run.

Henceforth, my Father, take my heart,
All sinful though it be,
And let it nevermore depart
From Him who died for me.

CHAPTER VI.

Hard Battles with the Great foe.

"My grace is sufficient for thee."

"Soldiers of Christ, arise,
And put your armour on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies,
Through His eternal Son.

"Strong in the Lord of Hosts,
And in His mighty power;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts,
Is more than conqueror."

"MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—How I wish you could see us on Sundays at three o'clock assembled in our garden! It was far too warm to continue meeting in Butcher Row in any of their rooms, and I feel the open air takes away the sense of fatigue in my work. We make such a picturesque group—the men ranged to my left, the women to my right, on the grass, most of them with babies in their arms; and our dog comes, wagging his tail, facetiously up to each of us, and at last lies down in the midst of us, quiet as possible. The men keep on their hats until I appear, and then, with one consent, every hat is raised, and reverently placed beneath the forms. Sometimes a refractory infant crows, and then we have a smile all round, until the father of the child rises with commendable gravity, takes it from the mother, and then order is again restored. When the Sunday-school is closing, their hymn disturbs us, so we generally stop and listen—it makes such a nice break. The men can, no doubt, recognise their children's voices, and they look so pleased. Charles, who is looking over my shoulder,

is in fits of laughter at my vivid imagination, but I should recognise *his* voice, I tell him. Stedman is leader in our own singing: the men call him my clerk; indeed, he is invaluable to me in every way—so faithful and true-hearted. I have been visiting amongst the people five nights a-week since I came home, and am busy now in Castle Foregate. I have had readings in the lodging-houses there occasionally, and like the work more than I can express. I must manage a reading there on Sunday nights, if possible; but Charles fears it will be too much for me; I can but try, and give it up if I break down. I have never visited anywhere yet, except in our own parish.”

“June 30, 1858.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—I have had such grief since I last wrote, but it is all right now. C——, a nailor, one of my stanchest members, a fine, noble-hearted man, broke down on Tuesday night. It was a close, sultry, cloudy day. I said to Charles, ‘Will it not be wonderful if we don’t some of us break down to-day, it is *so* sultry?’ Five men were missing at my reading that night, four of whom sent me satisfactory reason for their absence. I went next day, at C——’s tea-hour, to know if he was well, for he had never stayed away before. Judge of my consternation when his wife told me ‘he broke last night, and came home tipsy at ten o’clock, and he was *that* ashamed he

couldn't face me this morning ; so he went off at six, and he's drinking now.' I entreated her not to scold him on his return, but to take no notice, and to be particularly kind when he got sober, assuring her that she would win him back for life if she would only be wise and gentle. On my way home, at the entrance of the passage leading to his house, I saw, to my great comfort, C—— standing quietly. Upon observing me, he looked ashamed, and instantly sat down, on the step leading to the street, by the side of another man. My path being blocked, I was obliged to ask one of the men to make way for me ; the other man rose up, and I felt I could not pass poor C—— without speaking to him. He looked so inexpressibly miserable, it went to my heart ; so I said as kindly as I possibly could, '*I know* you feel so unhappy, C——. I am so grieved about you ; but *do* have courage to return, I beseech you. I want to comfort you, and make you as happy as you used to be. Don't be discouraged. Join my brave little band once again ; they are all so fond of you, and will so welcome you back. Your wife is longing to see you come back all right. You *will* come back, C——, will you not ?' He could hardly speak, but said something about 'feeling very miserable,' and 'ashamed,' and so forth. On my return through Butcher Row, I called on Stedman, Charles W——, and B——, and begged them each to go and encourage him back to his house. They called that evening on him, and strength-

ened him by their kindness. On the following day, I left a note for him with his wife. Perhaps you would like to see what I wrote him. Here's a copy—

‘DEAR BROTHER,—I write these few lines to shew you that I feel an earnest desire, as a sincere friend to you and your wife, to see you come back to our brave little society. Do not be out of heart. It will be a short triumph to your false friends, who rejoiced in getting you over to their side on Tuesday night. I beseech you have the manliness and courage to break from their bad influence, and lose no time in joining us again, for we are your true friends, and will stand by you, and help you to be firm, if you will only try yourself to do the same. I have learned by experience that there is no strength *in ourselves* to overcome *any* besetting sin. Oh, come and try the strength of Jesus Christ, which, if we ask God to give us for His dear Son's sake, we shall surely get; and you need not fear falling if you pray to Him to keep your heart. Just as you are, lift up your heart to Him who loves you and died for you, and ask Him to comfort and strengthen you, and you will get comfort and strength. After seeing you on that step yesterday, I came home and cried bitterly, and prayed for you. I felt you were truly grieved for the past, and I believe you are thoroughly sincere.—Your faithful friend,

‘JULIA W——.’

He came back for his month's probation, and signed with all his heart, and will never break again, I feel sure.* He seemed overwhelmed with my kindness, and that of the men.

On the following Tuesday night [we meet in our garden on Tuesday nights as well as on Sunday afternoons] I thought it might be wise and kind to give receipts for making ginger-beer and treacle-beer, to the wives. 'The proof of the pudding is in the eating'—so we had some made for ourselves; and after the meeting I invited them into the kitchen to taste it. You would have laughed at the scene. The corks flew in all directions—the drink was as frisky as champagne. The first bottle of treacle-beer was pronounced to be 'as good as old ale,' which was a questionable compliment for a teetotalter to make! Next day I called at their homes, and explained to the wives how it ought to be made, giving the recipe, and twelve strong pint bottles, by way of encouragement, to each.

Last Sunday in church, I looked at Stedman [he sings bass, and sits in the same pew in the gallery with me and the children], and was suddenly impressed with the notion that he is in consumption. It came over me with such a shock, that I was upset, and cried for some minutes, but no one noticed it, or knew the reason why. Poor fellow! I can't bear to think of it.

Did I ever tell you about J. —, a shoemaker

* This has been fully verified hitherto.

in our parish? He is a highly intelligent man, as nearly all the shoemakers are, with such a fine countenance, but unfortunately has acquired the habit of drinking, which makes it necessary for his wife to work hard with her needle to get a living for herself and neglected children. At her request I called one day to see him. Unfortunately he was at dinner. I waited till he had done; he then caught up his hat and was rushing off, but I gently laid my hand on his arm; he is so very deaf it was no use to speak to him. He sat down as if spell-bound. He did not know me, as it was the first time he had ever seen me. I then put my face close to his ear, and said, 'I love your wife and children, and want to know you also; will you stop and let me talk to you?' So he stopped a bit; yet three times he caught up his hat after that, and was going to bolt off; but my look of entreaty made him resume his seat. He then began to speak, and confessed he was *miserable*; a slave to drink, easily led away by company, &c. I urged him to make *one firm stand* from that hour. I shall never forget the effect of my earnest entreaty; he looked so astonished, and thundered out, 'I must, I must, or I'm lost for ever.'

'No, you *shall not* be lost. Jesus Christ has died for you; you *shall* be saved. You *shall* turn over a new leaf; I will not let you go on in sin and misery.'

He cried; and so did I as I went on to say, 'Don't

you feel ashamed, my friend, to treat your good wife so badly? yet, see what a beautiful dinner she has provided for you out of *her* earnings. Oh, *why* do you spend *your* earnings on the publicans, who despise you, and only care for you as long as they can get your money?’

He could hardly speak, and said with emotion, ‘God has been striving with me this long while, and I have resisted His Holy Spirit.’

I answered, ‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.’

‘Yes; but I am such a hardened sinner.’

‘No, you are not; your heart is still soft with the Holy Spirit’s strivings. You still know and feel He is pleading with you.’

‘But my heart is so evil’

‘I know it is, *and so is mine*; but God, who has shewed *me* mercy, can shew you the same, and help you to love Him, and to live to Him; you *must* come to Him, for He has loved you, and has sent me to tell you so.’

I then told him of my work amongst the people, and how many had signed. He was so astonished. His wife blessed me over and over again after he left the room. She added, ‘He never lifted up his hand against me in his life when drunk; but *he spends all he gets nearly all the year round*; and yet, there’s not a kinder husband when sober.’ I shall go again

in a few days to see him. I have hope of him, he has so much heart left.*

Oh, what a *curse* this drink is! It becomes a *disease*. Those under its dominion *cannot* get out of its snare, except by totally abstaining, and they want a loving hand to lift them up to firm resolve, or they will go on drinking, and perish in their sins.

Dearest Caroline, I could no more now be a *Christian and not a total abstainer*, than I could be a *Christian and a drunkard*. The facts I witness have made me, for the sake of my own flesh and blood, my brothers and sisters of the working-classes, LOATHE the very sight of that which to them has been an occasion of sin and sorrow of heart—aye, *of going down to hell*. I saw, some weeks ago, a poor man at fifty-two years of age [the prime of life, if a man has a good uninjured constitution] on his death-bed. Drink killed him. He had been a spirit-drinker; alcohol circulated in every vein; his poor tongue was in an agony, as if the fire of hell already was felt by him. He had beside him a jug of water ‘to cool his tongue;’ every minute did the poor man fill his mouth with water, and when the coolness passed off, he spit it out, and again did the same; and so he went on for three visits I paid him. In vain did I speak of Christ; he was apathetic, dull, unimpressible; and thus he died. I could almost

* He signed the pledge eventually, and is very grateful and staunch, to the great comfort of his excellent wife.

give up my hope of heaven if I could be placed back, with my present knowledge and feelings, to the first year of our marriage. How many souls might have been saved, who are now lost, if I had but begun this blessed work earlier ; but it is no use making vain regrets. Henceforth I will live for one object, God helping me ; and that shall be to win men and women out of drunkenness for heaven and glory. Nobody cares for the poor drunkards. Why should *they* be left to perish ? Some of them are the finest men in heart and head ; well worthy of our most earnest efforts."

" July 30.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—Oh this awful drink ! Stedman came to me in sorrow a week ago, saying, ' It's a bad job ; William L—— came home tipsy last night, and he beat his wife and killed the baby.'

' What ! *my godchild* ! O Richard, how shall I ever see him again !'

However, I hoped the story might be exaggerated, so I hastily put on my bonnet and went to William's house. His wife told me ' he came home with such a face, bruised and broken, all bloody, and he was very drunk. So I thought to defend myself ; so I got my sister to help me, and we got big sticks.'

' Oh, you surely did not beat him ? Why did not you speak gently to him, and he would have gone to

bed quiet enough? The sight of your sticks was enough to make him fight you.'

'Well, I don't know, but I was afraid of his hitting me, so we hit him off from me and the baby, and he came and hit right and left at us with his hand; but he struck the baby, and stunned it. We carried it off to the Infirmary, and it revived and got well.'

'Where is he?'

'Up-stairs, on the bed.'

'I *must* go and see him;' so I went up after Mrs L——, and there he lay, hiding his face for very shame, and groaning. My heart was so sick I hardly knew what to say or do. 'Give me *the book*' [his Testament he always called by that name] 'you once loved, and let me read to you out of it.' He gave it me. I read Heb. x. 21–31, and Heb. vi. 4–9, slowly, without comment. Poor William groaned aloud. I then told him how deeply he had grieved his Saviour, and I went on till his heart seemed nearly broken; but I felt he required special treatment. Never did I speak before as I did then to him. The next day I took him a sponge, and charged him to use it for his poor face, with a plentiful supply of water, as often as he could. He was such an object, poor fellow, with the clotted blood and dirt from the road, having fallen down whilst fighting before he came home that awful night. This is the sixth day—I have seen him daily—he is greatly humbled. I believe this kindness of

mine will bind him faithfully for the future. I never will believe but that he did really love his Saviour when he seemed so hopeful some months ago ; and if I am right, God will yet bring him back, and we shall have him firmer than ever, for he will surely now distrust himself for the future.

Dear Stedman is on the sick-list. I must have told you, I think, before. I see him daily. I would rather see him safely laid to rest in Jesus than that he should ever fall away."

TO MISS G——.

"August 3, 1858.

MY DEAREST MARY,—Indeed, I feel as if all my body were heart, every inch of it—and as if one idea pervaded the whole, love to souls for Christ's sake. I never felt so till our beloved M——'s death severed me wholly from all thoughts beside saving souls. I cannot tell you how I agonise day and night for this one object. To me, the present time is so unspeakably precious, as sowing-time must always be to those whose heart yearns after an abundant harvest. I have only *one work—sowing all day long, till ten at night* : it is the happiest life I ever led. Spring-time is full of hope, is it not?—often of disappointment ; but who knows whether the present disappointments may not turn out to be the greatest blessings by and by ? What now looks unpromising may suddenly spring up, and blossom, and bear fruit when we least expect it.

Dear Stedman is in consumption. He comes at eleven o'clock daily, for conversation, reading, and prayer: precious seed-time it is, and a beautiful harvest it will be, in his case. I doubt whether education improves a man *for heaven*; I mean what men call education—classics, acquirements, &c. I believe it is a hindrance rather than help. I think that self-discipline, the yielding up of our *will* to Christ, the giving up ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, to Him and His service, is the only education that will *tell* by and by. And in this the poor are often far more learned than the rich—this self-discipline I see going on amongst the men so wonderfully, and it is unspeakably precious to me. It is most touching to see the struggles they make to get out of drunkenness—their very falls are touching. Their gratitude to me shames me when I think of my shortcomings to God. Do you know, dearest Mary, they are coming in such numbers to sign the pledge, nearly at the rate of one a-day, and all without any asking on my part. Indeed, except the first six men, I have not asked any others to sign. The men who have signed bring others, perfect strangers to me, and from all parts of the town. I feel so very much honoured by their coming, with all the simple trust of childhood, to me, as to a true friend. It is beautiful to be trusted and believed, is it not? Why do we not *trust God more?*”

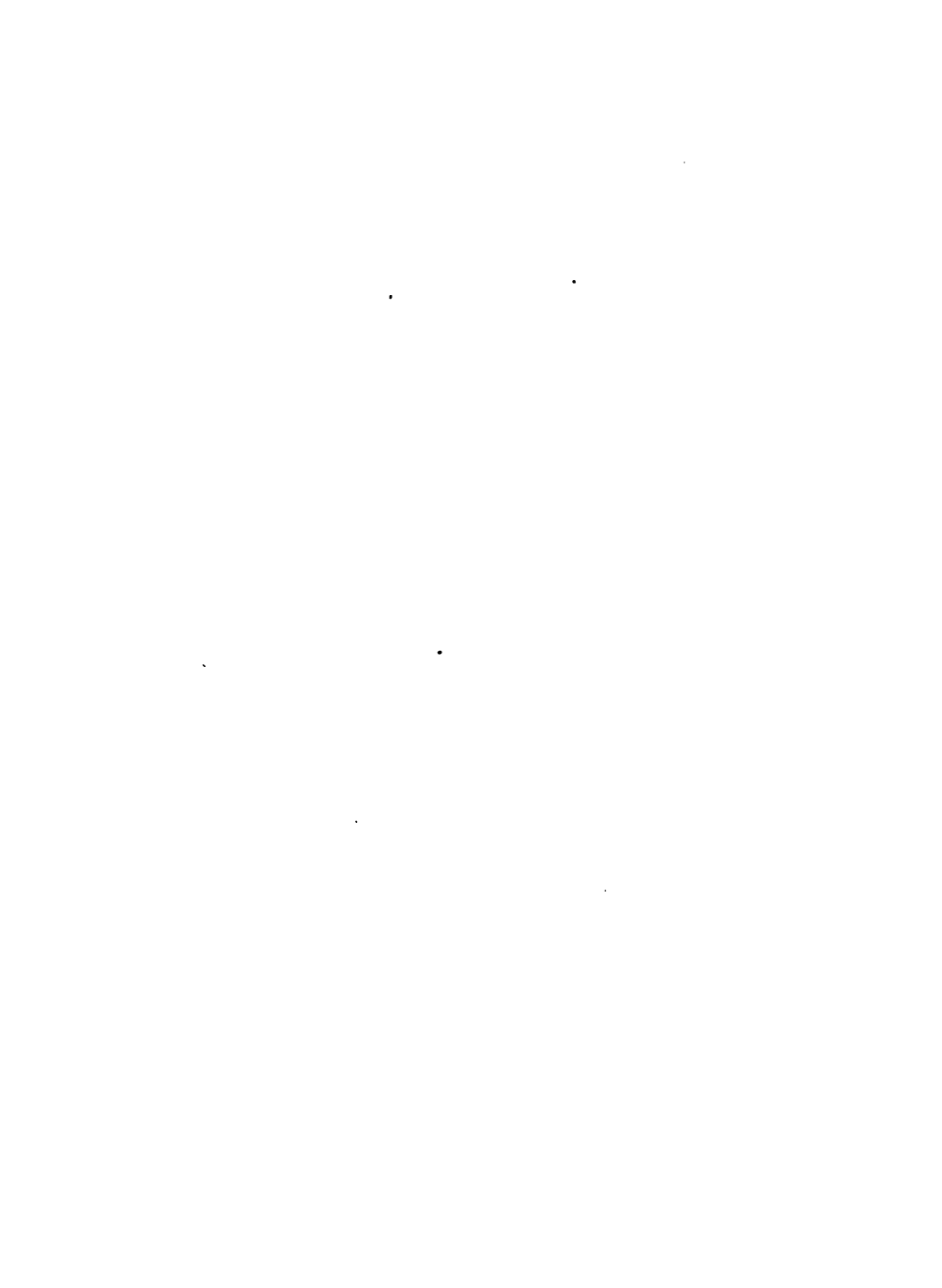
CHAPTER VII

Steady Progress.

"FATHER ! by Thy Spirit teach us,
Lead us on from grace to grace ;
Let not sin or evil reach us,
Till we see Thee face to face
Strong in Thee, our souls enlighten'd
With thy Spirit's inward ray :
Strong in Thee, our pathway brighten'd,
Brightening to the perfect day

"Holy FATHER ! be Thou near us,
In temptation bring relief ;
With the hope of glory cheer us,
When our souls are bow'd with grief ;
To the quiet streams direct us,
Bid us rest in pastures green :
Through the barren waste protect us,
May we on Thy bosom lean."

W. P.



"August 11, 1858.

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—I have been so busy. Just think of my strength! *Thank God for it*: not only have I been five nights a-week from house to house, but now I have arranged to assemble as many people as will meet me at Mrs Jones's (the letter-writer), in Castle Foregate, at eight o'clock on Sunday nights.* My heart was stirred up to see the men and women in that part of the parish going to no place of worship. After working hard during the week, they drink on Saturday nights, and lie in bed or stand about the whole of Sunday. When I told Stedman of my intention this

* It is necessary to state that I had been for so many years looked upon by my sisters and others as the invalid of the family, and I had received so many cautions about "killing" myself with work, that I wrote as fully as I could of my busy doings, to convince them of my restored health and strength. These letters, being a literal copy of the originals, appear, without this explanation, so egotistical, that I feel it right to make this explanation. For years I had taken a district, but after two hours' work, I had often to pay the penalty of a week in bed. I believe that the entire relinquishment of stimulants was the means, under God, of effecting this marvellous change in my constitution. Every one who attended our church will remember how seldom I was able to sit out the service; and how often I was taken out of church ill, having fainted, &c.

morning, he said, 'Won't it be too much for you, ma'am?' and then he added, 'Well, some of us men will go down after evening service, and be there agen you arrive, to encourage the others to come, and to strengthen you!' Was not this *beautiful* of him? My three o'clock Sunday reading in the garden increases. I had five men last Sunday, besides my twenty teetotallers. Did I tell you that six women have signed? About fourteen women generally attend on Sundays.

To-day I read 'The Fool's Pence' in the Butcher Row, in the passage where they are making the grand reservoir for the new Water-works Company, to a very attentive but small audience. Half the men were working during the dinner-hour, and will be working half the night, to get it ready for laying the stone to-morrow, on which occasion a dinner will be given to the labourers at the 'Butchers' Arms,' and, as a matter of course, all the men will get drunk 'for the good of the house.' I dare not except my two pledged men, for though they are now stanch, they are sure to be *laughed out of it* on that occasion.*

R. Stedman is so gentle and patient; I keep hoping he is not in consumption. He seems at times to believe he shall never get better. He was much impressed last Sunday in church by a hymn we had to the tune

* It is satisfactory to state that one of these is still on our list, as firm as any man amongst us; although he did break down on that occasion. Oh, when will people cease to give dinners and suppers at PUBLIC-HOUSES to their workmen!

of 'Luther's Hymn.' The words made me think of him, and I involuntarily turned my head, and saw the tears standing in his eyes, and his face was flushed. (He does not now sit with us, as he is not allowed to sing.)

'This life's a dream, an empty show,
But the bright world to which I go
Hath joys substantial and sincere—
When shall I wake and find me there?

'O glorious hour! O blest abode!
I shall be near, and like my God;
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul.

'My flesh shall slumber in the ground
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound,
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise.'

He said next day, he never felt so solemnised in his life as when we were singing those words, they seemed so 'REAL' to him; he read them over on his return home. As he spoke to me, his eyes were full of tears. I see him so very often now; he comes here daily for half a pint of porter, ordered by the doctor. To him it has never been a temptation to desire more.

Yesterday [Tuesday] we had thirty men and ten women in the dining-room [it was too cold to meet in the garden]. Mr Dundas, our late curate, addressed them; five signed afterwards. We must meet elsewhere for the future. Stedman suggests that we try the school-room; but I shall feel so nervous in that large room, it

will look as if Charles ought to be there as speaker, instead of poor me. My friend, Philip G——, the Irishman, who said on the Wrekin, 'May you live for ever, and die happy,' sent me such a nice letter to-day from ——, where he is gone corn-harvesting. He went sixteen days ago, and enclosed me a P. O. order for £1, to take charge of for him—a good proof that he is keeping the pledge! Charles W—— and some others have hay-harvested and corn-harvested with greater comfort than ever they did in their lives before, on milk and water, cold tea, cocoa, or coffee. They had told me the corn-harvesting used to knock them up sadly; they now see that it was the *drink* taken at that time, not the work done, which played such havoc with them. They are so proud of their success—so thankful for health and strength given," &c.

"August 25, 1858.

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—I am beside myself with joy at the prospect of coming to see you next Monday.

Last night I could not sleep; was it wonderful? We met for the first time in the school-room—*ten* new faces from our part of Castle Foregate amongst the people, so I have not laboured there in vain, thank God for it. It was hard for me to get on with that wonderful little book, 'Light for the Line,' it is so touching. Forty men were present to hear it, and every one wept. Stedman had told me to expect a little speech from him at night, seconded by the next two members in rank. 'The fact is, ma'am, you give the men Prayer-books

and Hymn-books as soon as you see they begin to come to church, and it's too much; it's give, give, all the while. We shall soon break a willing bank. It's not the thing to treat a kind lady so. So we've resolved to put a penny a-week each of us towards Prayer-books, Bibles, or any other books, to save you.' Emma G—— (who is staying with us) was heartily interested in our evening, and in the little speech which was made by honest Stedman on that occasion. Charles W—— jumped up, and collected the pennies in his cap, and they turned them into silver, and laid them before me on the table. Was it not acting just like *gentlemen*? Such nice feeling! Mrs Davies, a widow, presented me with such a charming bouquet when I entered the room, as it was my first appearance in so public a character. Really I never knew half the affection and gratitude of these dear people before; they all looked so happy and pleased, and I felt so VERY happy amongst them.

By the way, as a proof of my quiet, incessant work, I must tell you of a droll event which occurred to me the other day. I met Mr C——, one of our parochial clergy. He crossed the street, saying, as he shook hands with me, 'Welcome back to Shrewsbury!' I felt puzzled for the moment, as if I must have been away somewhere, and then recollecting myself, said—

'I have not been anywhere; I have been at home ever since I came back on June 3, after my illness.'

'We have never seen you, and thought you were away the last three months.' "

"DEAREST C——,—On Saturday last, I went to the Castle Foregate at twelve o'clock to catch the navvies at the lodging-houses at their dinner, and invite them to my Sunday-night reading at Mrs Jones's, the letter-writer; but one and all said, 'We'll come any *week*-night, but not of Sundays; we've got only working clothes, and you had such gentlemen there last Sunday.' So I ended in arranging to meet them at Owen's lodging-house that same night. Emma G—— accompanied me there at a quarter past eight, but it being pay-night they had not come in; so we went to see other people until nine o'clock, as I knew the men would require time to get their suppers over. Twelve men and five women were assembled, and nothing could exceed the earnest attention and order.

I had such a conversation yesterday with Stedman on the Lord's Supper. We read the whole service together slowly, and then we spoke about Christ. I asked him, 'Do you love Him?'

He burst into tears, and said, 'Yes,' with a trembling voice; he is so very humble, and has a deep sense of sin. He said, 'I am unworthy to come to the Lord's table; it will be so solemn.'

'Yes, it is solemn; but *I* am unworthy too in the sense you mean, and shall never be otherwise.' And then I told him, 'We shall never be worthy to come, nor worthy to go to heaven,' and spoke of our being accepted *in Christ*, not in ourselves.

On Sunday, it was so damp we met in our kitchen at three o'clock, instead of the garden. I told the men, after I had finished, that I could not for the future admit more than two of them to the Castle Foregate readings at night, for I found, on visiting from house to house in that place, the people said, 'We can't come of Sundays, we've nothing but working clothes; those men who came with you last Sunday were such gentlemen, we could not meet them when we are so shabby.' The men laughed heartily at the compliment. Stedman and B—— accompanied me that night, carrying my bag. And as we walked home together, Stedman said, 'I never saw such a thing; all the men wanted to go down to-night; I had such work to keep them from it; but I told them it was your wish we should only go two at a time.'”

It will be seen that Stedman's health was then gradually fading away; it caused great sorrow amongst us all. The old members all loved him. It is a touching fact that he *would* go to the Castle Foregate readings every Sunday night. In vain did I tell him that the two services and the three o'clock meeting in our garden were almost beyond his strength, and that it was not fair that he should keep others from the evening reading, as I only admitted two of them. After that, the other men took their turn in pairs; but I was sure to hear Stedman's gentle cough before we had

been many minutes assembled. He somehow contrived to get in unobserved, and always walked home by my side, which gave me an opportunity of applying the subject we had been considering more closely to himself; and often as we walked have our hearts glowed with the theme most precious to us—the love of God in Christ; and the tears in his eyes at parting testified to the *reality* of his feelings.

“September 22, 1858.

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—Charles went to Bradford last week for a little visit to H—— B——. I found out a most important secret just before, that I was to receive a testimonial from the dear people, in expression of their gratitude to me, and on occasion of my having been six months a faithful teetotaller. Of course, no child on being promised its first toy ever felt more curious to know what it was to be than I did. My husband told Charles W—— that I was expecting to receive one of his little pigs [the teetotallers invest their savings in buying those interesting domestic animals], and this caused no small amusement to the men. Well, the day came at last. I gave on that evening a little sketch of my work from the commencement, taking for my motto, ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped us’—of course, applying it first to Joshua and his victories, &c. After this, I had to present a Bible to W—— D——, who had just completed his six

months. I had given a testimonial to the first eight members, thinking it would be nice for them to have something which might remind them in years to come of these early days of victory over a besetting sin. When this was over, Stedman left the room ; and as I was receiving the signatures of new men, I heard a little subdued sound of excitement, and, looking up, I saw every eye fixed on Stedman, who brought me a beautiful engraving [Glasgow Art Union], nicely framed—the subject most elegantly appropriate for a testimonial from true teetotallers,—‘The Villa Fountain.’ It was Stedman’s selection. I was so overcome by the loveliness of the gift, and the taste shewn in the choice. But poor Stedman could not make me a speech in presenting it ; his voice became choked ; his heart was too full. He told me next day, ‘Indeed, ma’am, I had such a nice little speech all ready, but I couldn’t bring it out any how ; and they all laughed at me about it after.’ On the back was a very nice, grateful expression of their feelings towards me, headed by a text from Scripture, ‘Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls.’ [I have asked Charles to preach from this verse next Sunday.] I was quite as stupid in returning thanks as Stedman was in making me the presentation speech ; in fact, I was quite overcome. In the midst of my perplexity, Charles W—— broke the silence most oppor-

tunely by exclaiming, with a most knowing smile, ‘You see, ma’am, it’s not one of my little pigs.’ The people were in fits of laughter, which was a most timely relief to us all. ‘There is but a step between the sublime and the ridiculous.’ I assure you I felt very grateful to Charles W—— for his little speech at that moment.”

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TO THE AUTHOR OF “ENGLISH HEARTS AND ENGLISH
HANDS.”

“October 27, 1858.

. . . . Last Saturday night, when B—— brought me his savings, he said, ‘John P—— is not fit to work next Monday, but he talked of going to try.’ He added, ‘When I saw how ill he looked, and that he hadn’t done a stroke of work for a fortnight, and that his poor wife and five children must feel the loss of it, I felt right sorry for him, and I knew you wouldn’t object to our making “a gathering” for him just among ourselves next Tuesday night.’ I was so very much pleased! the more so, because John P—— is a comparative stranger to the men, having recently joined us; it was therefore the more disinterested. We collected 15s. 7d., and two of the men took it to J. P—— the same night. ‘It was not so much the money, as the kindness shewn to me by strangers,’ said J. P—— to me afterwards, ‘that went to my heart: why, those two men came, and sat and talked to me as if I had been their brother! wasn’t it comforting?’”

To keep the link unbroken in the narrative, I must just add here some interesting facts about honest John P——. In March, work being scarce in Shrewsbury, John P—— went to W—— to undertake a job as bricklayer, upon the invitation of his brother, who was a carpenter in that village. Knowing the clergyman of the parish, I wrote to him, begging him to see John, and to refresh him by a religious conversation occasionally, as I had every reason to believe he had begun to love and serve his Saviour. To my dismay, Mr H—— wrote me word that John was staying at a beer-house kept by his brother. I was surprised he had not told me this fact about his brother before he left, for he had come to me the night before in low spirits, with tearful countenance, to ask me to pray with him before his journey next morning. I therefore wrote rather strongly to Mr H——, begging him to read my letter to John. A letter from John to me crossed this letter on the road, and it quite satisfied my mind as to John's sincerity and truthfulness; so I wrote a more comforting letter to him, expressing my confidence in him. To this I received the following reply:—

"March 11, 1859.

DEAR LADY,—I was very much pleased with your letter, for it eased my mind very much to know that you considered me safe from temptation so long as I

place my trust in God, who alone can sustain me. I saw Mr H—— on Sunday last, and he read me the letter he had received from you, which caused me to shed tears, to think that you was so unhappy about me, so I had made up my mind to come home Saturday next; but since your kind letter, which I received on Tuesday, has made me more content, I shall stay until the time appointed before. Please to put a shilling down for me towards the collection, until I return home, when I will repay you. I hope the Lord will bless you with a good collection for the two sick members. I read the tracts you so kindly sent me, the same day I received them, as I was kept in through the weather preventing me working. My companions have borrowed the tracts since I have been with them, which I hope may drop as good seed into some of their hearts. My brother makes me as comfortable as he possibly can. Please to give my respects to William, hoping I may find him better. I hope he will be able to go to church on Sunday. I think the singing will go a deal better without the organ of Wednesday nights, if they sing with heart and soul, and feel the importance of applying the hymns to their hearts.* I hope before long I may be there to

* This alluded to the special services for the working-classes during Lent, when, on account of the excellent and hearty singing of the people, we agreed to dispense with the services of the organist. After these services were discontinued, a permanent Thursday evening cottage-lecture was established in our school-room, which my husband and his curate take alternately. This is very well attended.

join in the praises of God, along with you all. Tell my wife to make herself comfortable about me, for I am very happy and comfortable myself. There is no fear of my breaking the pledge, as He who has hitherto kept me is able to do so still. Please to give my love to Stedman, B——, C. T——, and all inquiring friends. —I remain, your most obedient servant,

J. P——."

"March 18, 1859.

DEAR LADY, — I was truly glad to hear that you were getting on so well, and also that so many more are coming to the Lord's table. I have to thank God that He has kept me safe. I hope, by the providence of God, I shall be with you three weeks to-morrow. I am very sorry to hear that William L—— is so ill; give my kind love to him. I will try to be at home on Saturday to see him. Give my kind respects to Stedman, Charles T——, P——, and all the rest of my friends. I was much pleased with the tract you sent me; it filled up my spare time between the services to read it. I have not forgotten what you said about prayer, for I shall not be able to stand without the help of my Saviour—to Him must I fly in the hour of temptation. So I must conclude with my kind respects to you all.—Your most humble servant,

J. P——."

During J. P——'s absence, I heard nearly every week from him. It is a touching fact that he and William were specially noted as *fighting* men in their drinking days. 'I was every bit as bad a fighter as William was,' said J. P—— one day to me, 'but somehow we never tackled one another; we came from the same country, and was always good friends together.' John P—— is now district-visitor for me, and by his quiet, consistent walk and conversation, I have full assurance that he is taught of God.

"October 15, 1858.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—We gave the eight men who have kept the pledge six months a trip to Liverpool on Monday last. Six of these men had never been many miles from Shrewsbury in their lives. The trip trains were over, so we paid the ordinary fares. On their return from the station they came to shew themselves, and to tell us, with much glee, of all they had seen and enjoyed; the sail to New Brighton by steamer, with a band of music, the shipping and docks, the Museum, St George's Hall, Nelson's Monument, and last, not least important to Charles W——, *the Slaughter-houses*. These eight men are my district-visitors, and help me, by taking tracts to the members fortnightly. At present we have sixty members; of these only twelve are non-parishioners. I have given their names to their respective clergymen. . . .

I cannot continue the meetings in the Castle Foregate on Sunday nights; it is too much for me after the three o'clock meeting, and our two services. However, I have carried them on for two months. Last night the room in the Castle Foregate was so crowded that it upset me terribly. I thought I should have fainted. I could not get on a bit; so, after taking a glass of water, I dismissed the people. Several of the men walked home with me, and they suggested that I should throw the two meetings into one, and hold it at eight o'clock in the school-room. I spoke to Charles about it at supper, and he thought it would be a good plan. You must think of us, therefore, for the future, as assembled there at that hour. I wonder sometimes whereunto my work will grow. I shall love the leisure of the Sunday afternoons for visiting the sick, &c. We must devise some plan for amusing the men in the long winter evenings. There must be some counter-attraction found for them to make up to them the loss of the public-houses. Some of them find enough employment at home in contriving things for beauty or comfort; but all are not clever at handicrafts. Others find incessant occupation in leisure hours with their pigs or their gardens."

"October 31.

DEAREST CAROLINE,— Since writing to you, we have begun a night-school for the men. It arose thus:

we had thought first of a reading-room, with newspapers, periodicals, and games, such as draughts, chess, and dominoes. On mentioning it to Stedman, he looked astonished, and said, 'What! *like a public-house!* that will never do. Let's have a night-school.' And then he added, 'We should soon have the young uns coming to amuse themselves if we had games; and we should have gambling—quite as well be going on with the drink as to be gambling.' This was a new idea to us. We accordingly gave notice for a night-school, and commenced it on Monday the 18th. We meet two evenings a-week, at half-past seven, for an hour and a-half. We read the first half-hour, have tables and arithmetic the second, and writing the third. I take the first class in reading, and adopt the same plan as in our day-school, thus: I read the first sentence aloud, the whole class read it afterwards together, led by my voice. No. 1 reads alone to the next period, then all read it together aloud with him. No. 2 reads the third sentence alone, then all read it together, and so on; thus there is no time for listlessness, or losing places in our books. I look with astonishment at these men, of whom there are twenty-five in my class, from thirty to forty-five years of age, and wonder how they can, after their day's work, apply themselves closely to study, for to them it is, of course, stiff work. Sometimes a little blunder is made in reading, and we stop to have a hearty laugh, and proceed as orderly as

possible. They are so very gentle, a thousand times more manageable than children would be, so thoughtful, and afraid of giving trouble. They keep their copy-books very neat. Some of them are learning to write for the first time, beginning most patiently with straight strokes, pot hooks, and hangers. Nearly all these men have been some months in my society, so I know them well. I look forward to our school-nights with great pleasure. It is charming to teach those who are willing to learn, and who are so cheerful at the work too. There are more than fifty names down in our list of scholars."

"November 12.

DEAREST CAROLINE, — On Friday week, when I went to the night-school, the woman who cleans it had just washed it, and the boards were all wet. The very sight horrified me; I said it might be the death of us all. However, nobody caught cold except me, and dear Charles took my reading on Sunday night in consequence. Of course, we gave strict injunctions that such should never happen again; when, lo! the very next Friday evening, to our dismay, the room was exactly in the same plight! I was very fierce about it then; and on the following Monday poor Stedman said to me, 'Indeed, ma'am, if the school-room's wet next Friday, you must excuse me coming. I was that ill on Saturday, I thought I must have died.' Well,

the consequence is no trifle with me, for here I am laid up with rheumatism, and cannot rise from my bed; but I hope, with a week's quiet rest, that it will pass off. I am not sorry to have a little breathing space to look back on my year's work, and to see how to consolidate my society.

I marvel to think that since October 1st sixty-four men have signed the pledge. Of these, three have broken. I have called on all except the last eight, and on *some* of them I have called several times; so that, hitherto, God has enabled me to keep pace with the progress of my society, and efficiently, thoroughly, and heartily to keep them together, and to attach them to me and to each other. My district visitors have done their duty well, visiting their members, and changing their tracts; thus, once a fortnight every man is seen, and kindly visited. This keeps them interested in one another. There is an *esprit de corps*, and also a feeling that they are loved and cared for—that their names are remembered in prayer, their sorrows sympathised in.

I had a little note to-day from the Rev. J. W. Robinson, incumbent of Christ Church, Chelsea, a perfect stranger to me even by name; he encourages me by kind wishes, &c. I wonder how he heard of my work! He enclosed a bill announcing their annual Total Abstinence Society soiree and meeting. It gave me a new idea: would it not be nice to get up such an

affair at Christmas, or the first week in the New-Year? Only, instead of throwing it open to the public, the tickets for the supper shall be bought by the members alone; 1s. 6d. each ought to furnish a substantial repast. I should delight in seeing them all together, and we could invite the clergy in whose parishes some of the men reside.

Since writing the above, dearest Caroline, I have heard that my proposition about a supper has already been anticipated by the men themselves; but it was to be a great secret, to take me by surprise. Charles W—— said, ‘We must keep it from her till we have got all the subscriptions in, as firmly as we kept it about that picture we gave her; but *we’ll have the supper, and it shall cost her nothing: for she has spent too much money on us already.*’

C. Thomas called yesterday to inquire for me; he said to Charles, ‘I knew she was doing too much, and told her so. Couldn’t she get somebody to help her in it?’ but Charles explained to him that nobody else could feel the same interest in them as I did, and to have a half-hearted helper would be a greater trial than none at all. C. Thomas added, ‘I bless the day she ever entered our house, and I am sure my wife does too.’”

* November 15, 1858.

DEAREST C——,—On Sunday afternoon I went to

see Stedman, and little Dick, who is ill. The child sat on my knee nearly an hour, for he fell asleep, and I did not like to disturb him. The surgeon who attends him does not think he will recover. He is six years old; such a pretty child—very like his mother. I love him, for he used to pray for me when I had the small-pox. His father had told me that he used to go up-stairs alone, kneel beside the bed, and pray, ‘Please, God, bless Mrs W——, and make her well, and bring her back to us safe. I want to see her again.’ He told me, as Dick lay asleep on my knee, ‘I was awoke up last night by that child kneeling up, and praying the prayer you gave us, [O God, wash me from all my sins in the blood of Christ; give me the Holy Spirit, for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen,] then he stopped; and after a bit he went on, and prayed for me, and his sisters, and Billy, and for you and the master.’

Presently Dick awoke up. I asked him, ‘Are you afraid to die, dear child?’

‘No.’

‘Do you love Jesus?’

‘Yes.’

‘Where is He?’

‘In heaven.’

‘Can you see Him?’

‘No.’

‘Can He see you?’

‘Yes.’

‘Does He love you?’

‘Yes.’

‘How do you know?’

‘*He died for me.*’

Was it not sweet? I went on to ask, ‘Where will you go when you die?’

‘To Jesus.’

‘Why do you think you shall go to Him?’

‘*Because He died for me.*’

Richard Stedman was so overcome by his little boy’s answers that he could not help shedding tears. After this, the dear child fell asleep again. He is very weak. Stedman took him from my arms, and we covered him with blankets, on two chairs, without awaking him. I never spent a more peaceful, beautiful hour.

I told Stedman we had received a thousand tracts for distribution on the race-course next week, and asked him if he thought there would be any use to mention it at the meeting. He said, ‘You’ll be sure to get some of the men to distribute them, and if not, I’ll take them myself.’ I had four volunteers; so we purchased a quantity of tracts, and a sovereign’s worth of fourpenny Testaments, and sent our four trusty messengers, with charge to give the tracts and to sell the Testaments. They did their work faithfully, and without expecting any payment for it.”

" November 22, 1858.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—On Saturday evening I accompanied Benjamin —— on his district from 7.30 till 10.15. This comprises Castle Foregate and the new part of the town called Castle Fields, where a number of streets have suddenly sprung up; we also went beyond the Factory. Benjamin declared I had walked seven miles; but suppose it was a third of that distance, was it not a good evening's work? We found all the members at home with their wives and children. I had such hearty welcomes at each house, especially from the wives, who quite overwhelmed me with kind speeches and blessings. I was particularly interested with John D——, a tall, military-looking man, who is a labourer. He has been a soldier seventeen years, and served six years in Bengal. The old places I have heard our dear father speak of—Saugor, Cawnpore, Lodiana, &c.—were quite familiar to him. He spoke very intelligently about the state of matters in India since the mutiny. He shewed me a large Bible for which he had subscribed weekly. On the title-page he had written his name, 'John D——, his Bible; bless the Lord for it; and may He give His Holy Spirit to enable me to profit by the reading of it! *Amen.*' Was it not beautiful? This man left his wife and little children buried at Cawnpore. It is a touching fact that all the men in my society who served in India have buried their wives and children there. Of course,

the climate plays the same havoc with the constitutions of *poor* women and children as on those who are rich. The latter can afford to send their wives and children to England, and thus rescue them when ill from an untimely grave. How much we ought to feel for our soldiers who go to unhealthy or trying climates!

Another man whom I saw that night, a nailor, said, 'It's a wonderful sight to see the men at your meetings of Tuesday nights! You have got some of the biggest drunkards of the town, looking as I never saw them look before, for I knew them all, and used to *fuddle* with many of them; but now they look thoughtful and happy, as if they were *altered* men.' He named two especially who are indeed *new men*, thank God for it. Certainly I need no proof that God is with us, blessing the work with wonderful success."

TO THE AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH HEARTS AND ENGLISH
HANDS."

"Christmas-Day, 1858.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Rejoice with me in the prosperity God has given me in my work. I am so overwhelmed at the blessing which has followed me this year, that I hardly know how to praise His name enough. There are 130 men [*teetotallers*] in my ranks, who all seem in earnest—a large proportion attending

every Tuesday-night meeting, unless hindered by work; and some, I hope and believe, have closed with Christ.

Just imagine how encouraging to me to be asked by some of the men to meet them on Christmas Eve, and on the last night of the year, for prayer—not thinking it too much to come for an hour's devotional meeting on those nights which hitherto have been to many of them seasons of riotous mirth and drinking! Fifty-four men attended last night. On a Tuesday night we should consider that a small meeting; but when we know that many seize any holiday leisure to do all sorts of necessary little jobs at home, and that others were busy at work to the latest moment, it is wonderful that even that number could come on Christmas Eve. On Tuesday nights we generally muster 150 or 160 persons, including women. We have had to add a large number of forms, as the fixed benches in our school-room did not suffice to contain our growing numbers. Seventy men now attend some place of worship, and come at eight o'clock, looking so respectable and well-dressed, to our Sunday-evening meetings. I encourage the non-parishioners to attend their own parish churches; and several of the clergy tell me that I have added to their congregations considerably, for some who never used to attend public worship now do so regularly.

The men are now subscribing eighteenpence each

towards a supper tea; we propose paying for the female members (thirty in number) ourselves. It will take place on the first Tuesday in the new year. You must think of us on that evening.

I have only three nights a-week now for visiting the people, as the school takes up two. God blesses me at every step. He gives me such health and strength of mind and body, and thorough enjoyment in my work, *bless His holy name*; and He gives me, too, such acceptance in the presence of these dear people.

It has been a *wonderful* year to me! I often think how much I owe, under God, to *you*, dear friend, for stirring me up to live closer to Jesus, and to devote heart and life more unreservedly to Him. If through my instrumentality any souls are saved, I shall regard them quite as much *your* 'crowns of rejoicing' as mine. Except for your wonderful book, 'Hearts and Hands,' I should, as far as I can see, have remained powerless to this day. The work I have undertaken would certainly never have been thought of, at least not in its present form. What an honour to be allowed to work for God in any way! Dear Mr —— met me the other day, and said, 'I trust you are not *elated*.' His question brought tears to my eyes instantly; it seemed so strange to *expect* that I should be elated! I answered, 'Can the *axe* boast that it has cut down a tree? Is it not the hand that wields it to whom honour is due?' I see now why people refuse me their sym-

pathy—and dear friends some of them are too. But why should they do so? I never stood more in need of it in my life, for some of my trials and discouragements have nearly broken my heart at times. When I had hoped and believed that I saw fruit to eternal life springing up, some root of bitterness has arisen and made me doubt whether it was not all false. A kind word of sympathy from a loving Christian heart would often have strengthened and refreshed me; but God has seen it good to withhold it from me, and thus to draw me only to seek for refreshment, strength, and courage from Him."

CHAPTER VIII.

Our First Annual Report and Meeting.

We "thanked God, and took courage."

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It was with an overflowing heart to the Giver of all mercies that I presented a copy of the accompanying Address to every member, and the motto with which it closes was also printed separately on an ornamental card, to hang up in their cottages, as a healthy stimulant when faint and weary with the daily warfare, and to remind them of the source of all strength, "*Looking unto JESUS.*" Many of these cards I afterwards saw *framed*.

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,—By the help of our God we are come to the close of our first year; and when I look back on the way He has led me in my work amongst you, I am sure I can truly say that His presence has gone with us in every step.

It was on Sunday, the 24th January last, that, with a trembling heart, yet earnest purpose, I asked John Davies, the first man in your list, to allow me to read the Scriptures at his house, with prayer. I fixed on three o'clock, because it did not interfere with the services in our church. I saw, with sorrow, that few

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women, and still fewer men amongst you, attended public worship; my little meetings were begun in prayerful hope that some might be stirred up to see the importance and the blessing of serving God, and honouring His name, and His day; and, blessed be God, I now see, with thankfulness, at least seventy of you attending church and my Sunday readings, shewing, by your earnest and attentive countenances, that you come to worship Him, and to learn to serve Him better.

On Tuesday night, the 26th January, we assembled for the same purpose at another house. From that time until the present, these *weekly* evening readings have never been omitted; and the attendance, which began by two or three men, and as many women, has swelled, as you know, to one hundred and fifty men and thirty women.

Together with the cottage readings, I began at the same time a course of night visits amongst you, in order to become acquainted with the men in our parish. It pained my heart to think that no one from our class of life knew *you*, my brothers. I resolved, therefore, in God's strength, to begin what seemed a strange work for a lady, to go myself at nights, when you return home from your daily work, to learn your habits of thought, to enter into your sorrows, trials, temptations, and to speak kindly to you of Him who is a Brother born for adversity, our blessed Lord, 'THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.' I bless God I ever did so, for it has taught me

to respect and love many amongst you in no common way; and you must allow me to thank you for the hearty and true welcome, and gentle courtesy you have ever shewn me. Some of my happiest moments have been spent amongst you; and it has been a rich reward to me to see the earnest resolve and brave purpose to lead a different life, so nobly carried out by many of you, amidst constant trials and temptations. ALL HONOUR TO YOU, dear friends, for your WILLING* teetotalism. If you have been enabled by it to bear manfully the jeers and taunts of those who would delight to see you return to your former courses, or if you have learned that SELF-DISCIPLINE is a necessary part of our Christian soldiership, then your total abstinence has done you good, and you will have to bless God for it to all eternity.

It will be interesting for you to know that one hundred and eighty-seven men have signed this year; of these, fifty-eight have broken the pledge, eight have returned to our ranks, and one hundred and twenty-nine have never broken, which makes our total number one hundred and thirty-seven men: to these may be added thirty-four women. During Christmas week, I am thankful to say, we lost only six men, and not one woman; and, what is still more remarkable, on Show-Monday, we did not lose a single member!

* This alludes to their coming to sign the pledge of their own accord; unsolicited by me, with the exception of the first six—and until they came, perfect strangers to me.

In almost every case where a man has broken the pledge, it has been through vexation, not through love of drink, nor often through influence of former companions. Let me beseech you, my dear friends, to come at once to *me* when you are in sorrow, as to one who feels strongly with you, and *do not* fly to the public-house, by which you make matters infinitely worse, inflicting an injury not only on yourselves and all those who have joined our society, but also on me, who am your sincere and hearty friend.

In conclusion, I must not forget to thank you, my six head men, for your kind and ready co-operation with me in every time of difficulty and interest, for your faithful and zealous help in visiting the districts I have allotted to you, and your steady adherence to the rules we have made, by which we mean, by the help of God, to abide.

And now, my dear friends, let our New Year's motto be earnestly and prayerfully remembered by us all—'Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, LOOKING UNTO JESUS, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God.' (Heb. xii. 1, 2.)

And may God bless you each and your families,

for Jesus Christ's sake, prays your affectionate and sincere friend,

JULIA B. W——,

President.

ST ALKMOND'S VICARAGE,

January 1, 1859."

TO THE AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH HEARTS AND ENGLISH HANDS."

"January 10, 1859.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I send you some papers, my New-Year's motto for the people, the report, and the notice of the united prayer-meeting for the first Monday in the New Year, when all the teetotallers who could attended, thus gladdening my heart by their *real enjoyment* of the devotional tone of the meeting.

I cannot tell you how I longed for you last Tuesday. We had our first annual meeting of 'St Alkmond's Total Abstinence Society' in the Lion Room. A very substantial supper tea was provided, to which each man subscribed his full share [eighteenpence], with the true-hearted, self-reliant feeling which Christianity and teetotalism has brought them. I presented each member, on entering, with a charming bouquet of double violets, primroses, &c., procured from Covent Garden market; and I had to pin nearly every nosegay on the women's shawls and men's coats with my own hands; it was so very amusing. We made the tables quite gay with evergreens and flowers. Several of the paro-

chial clergy and their wives were present. After tea, the tables were removed, and the doors thrown open to the public; but as no bills had been printed to announce it, no one scarcely, except the working-classes, entered; this was *just what we wished*, and the room became very crowded. The clergy then addressed the people, and we had a most happy evening. A navvy and another working-man also spoke extremely well. Our new crimson and gold banner ['St Alkmond's Total Abstinence Society, established January 1858'] looked quite brave, arranged by the men at the head of the room, surmounted by our British flags; and they dressed the room beautifully with festoons and branches of holly. The members were so proud of their bouquets, by which they were distinguished from the rest of the audience.

I grieve to say poor Stedman broke a second blood-vessel the night before, after his return from the prayer-meeting. He ought not to have been with us at our tea-party; but he looked so happy to be amongst us, we could not find it in our hearts to forbid his coming. His pale face quite upset me; and C. Thomas said, 'I can't look at him without getting my eyes full of tears.' He is now laid up in bed. I do not know how I shall bear to lose him. I bless God so for him. If my work amongst them had only been the means, under God, of rescuing *him* from sin and hell, it would be a rich reward indeed."

CHAPTER IX.

Facts and Incidents.

“Strong drink ! how many fine intellects hast thou ruined ! how many strong men hast thou made weak ! how many orphans and widows have to accuse thee of all their woe ! how many of thy victims hast thou doomed to the cold, dark grave !”—W. PALK.

“By the ties this vice hath riven,
By the homes this sin hath marr’d,
By the souls this curse hath driven
Unreclaim’d to their reward;

“By the earth which it is thinning,
By the hell which ends its track,
Use your influence with the sinning,
Guide your Father’s stray sheep back.”

TO THE AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH HEARTS AND ENGLISH
HANDS."

"I SOMETIMES feel disappointed at the total-abstinence phase my work has assumed, because I fail to get the sympathy of CHRISTIANS in it, so great is their *prejudice* against it. I wish all such could hear the men speak for themselves on that subject. If a man were addicted to lying or stealing, we should think it beautiful and right that he should shun all places and things, however harmless to others, which were to him occasions of temptation. Why, then, should any Christian look with coldness and suspicion on the noble and manly resolve of the once drunken man to shun evil company, and the *fatal* FIRST glass, which is to him the beginning of all evil? I am quite certain that, without TOTAL abstinence, no permanent good will be done to the working-classes, surrounded as they are by temptations to drunkenness. At least, *I could do nothing*; for until the besetting sin and the bad companions are given up, no working-man [at least not one in five hundred] will ever attend any place of

worship. My husband, his curate, and Scripture-reader, in vain had cottage-lectures in our parish for years. Not a *man* would attend them, *only women did so*; and now, to their surprise, I get one hundred and fifty men on Tuesday nights, and at least seventy men to attend church twice every Sunday. Charles said from the platform, after our tea-party, that I had solved a problem which he had been years trying to make out—namely, how to get hold of the working-classes. Their Sundays are now emancipated; they have gained two days. They used to lie in bed on Sundays till nearly dinner time, and then either went to lie down again, or else took their seats at the public-houses till night; of course, after that they felt incapacitated for Monday's work, so that they lost two days. The total abstinence pledge has thus rescued the Sabbath for God, and the Monday for their earthly master. They not only go twice on Sundays to their several places of worship, but they also come to my reading at eight o'clock, and enjoy a country walk besides, if they like it. It is most touching to see how they come to me, from all parts of the town, begging to be received into the Temperance Society.

One day, when I was summoned into the kitchen to see a man who wished to speak to me, finding that he wanted to sign the pledge, I sent for Charles W—— to witness his signature. The stranger looked earnestly at me, and exclaimed, putting his hand to

his breast, 'Put me in a rivet *here*,' with emphasis; 'I want to be bound fast, for if I *once* TASTE I'm done for.' Before I had time to answer, Charles W—— exclaimed, 'You attend her meetings regular in the school-room; you'll have a rivet put in fast enough then, I warrant you.' 'Yes, and by a higher power than mine,' was my answer. 'That's what I mean,' said Charles W——; 'he'll hear something there to shew him that he must look above for strength.' Was not this good?

Nothing can exceed the thankfulness of the men to me for helping them to get rid of *the* galling thralldom which, like a fatal infatuation, binds them on every hand—the drinking-customs are so strong, and are inwrought into every kind of trade arrangements. When I see a new man beginning to attend church or my readings, it is to me a very solemn sight, for a responsibility is laid on that man; he hears, with clear head and sane mind, the gospel message, perhaps for the first time in his life—certainly for the first time for some years; in many cases, for the first time for twelve or fifteen years. Think of this. I make a point of saying as little about drunkenness as possible; feeling that, as they have signed the pledge, their minds are made up on that subject. But I speak of Christ in every aspect, and this blessed theme, together with the utterly lost state of man out of Christ, makes endless variety of subject-matter for all our meetings. It is

beautiful to see the *value* set on the thoroughly religious tone of our meetings. Many of the men have spoken strongly to me on this subject. One who assures me that he was 'the *worst* in your lot, ma'am,' has said many times, 'It's them Tuesday nights coming in the midst of our working-days that does me so much good; it makes me go down of my knees afterwards to pray. There, I've said it to my wife, and to the men as works with me, I'd sooner miss my supper any night than I would miss them meetings; they have refreshed and done me good.'

I asked a very rough man one day, who had shewn no religious sentiment, though he came regularly, if he would not prefer sometimes to have secular subjects instead of always a *religious* meeting on Tuesday nights—something which might amuse as well as instruct them?

He answered, with astonishment, 'We come for *comfort*, and we get it. If you had amusement for us, you may get *children* to come, but us men would all stay away. We don't want to be AMUSED; we don't want to be *made children of*.'

Was not this good? I wish this could be known. I am sure that many kind-hearted clergymen fail of a blessing, by catering to the amusement of the working-classes instead of lovingly teaching them *to come to Jesus*. It is a libel upon religion to suppose it to be a dull, stupid thing—a penal code.

Charles W—— said one day to me when reading the Bible with Stedman at our house, 'I've found out there's no happiness in being half-hearted in religion ; I want to be whole-hearted at it, for that's the only way to make one happy.'


Speaking to some of them one day about a temperance meeting which was held elsewhere, the answer given me spoke volumes : ' Well, there wasn't religion in it like our own meetings in our school-room.'

Some persons have said to me, ' You will never keep up your meetings unless you give the people more variety ; you cannot expect drunkards to appreciate devotional meetings.' But I have the *fact* of the steady increase in our attendance, which reassures me. A twelvemonth's experience is worth more than all the theories which spring from want of faith.

It is a mistake to suppose because men are drunkards that they are naturally less intelligent, or less susceptible in heart and affections than other men. It may seem a strange fact, but it is nevertheless true, in my experience, that some who have been the *greatest* drunkards amongst us are the finest men, in every quality of heart and mind ; and when this once debasing habit is given up, the man stands emancipated, free to think, to reflect, to will—his very countenance changed, and lighted up with the glow of genius and every high-souled feeling. Many times when I have felt almost discouraged by the fall of those of whom I

had hoped better things, or when, in the stead of sympathy from some in my own position, I have met with disapproval or coldness, and have felt sorely tried and hindered in my work, a word of strong Christian counsel and comfort has come to me from some of these newly-gained brothers, which has acted as a cordial to a fainting spirit, and strengthened and encouraged me more than I can express. There are some first-rate men in our society, men of strong purpose and high moral principle, with hearts capable of every generous and noble feeling. It is worth spending one's life to rescue such from the debasement and slavery of one fatal habit, and to gain them for Christ and eternal glory. Oh! what it will be to meet them hereafter!

One and all have confessed to me the want of *something*, they knew not what, in their days of sin which kept them *restless* and *miserable*; they never felt *happy* or *satisfied*. God has lodged in every man's heart an undefined sense of *need*, which haunts him, in spite of every expedient by which he tries to fill up this gap; and hence, no doubt, the intuitive belief, which is *universal*, in the necessity and efficacy of prayer to some Being higher and more powerful than himself. It is, I believe, this sense of need, and the first impression received of the grace and mercy of God in Christ Jesus upon a heart weary of sin and longing for rest, that has caused many of the least likely in my ranks



to attend our meetings regularly, and to listen with an attention I never saw equalled in any place of worship ; and then, when Christ's love and sympathy were spoken of, subdued sobs and deep earnest sighs have arisen, until nearly every man in the assembly has wept like a child.

A shoemaker who has often spoken to me of his past drunkenness, said one day to me, 'It's the most wonderful sight I ever saw, worth walking a hundred miles any day to see, these meetings of ours in the school-room. There I see men I've drunk with, men who never thought any more than me of going to any place of worship, sitting listening with earnest countenances, all looking so full of thought, and yet so happy, not a scowl on a single face. There, it comes over me even to think of it. You don't know the men as I do, so you can't understand how wonderful it is. I've had hard work to keep from bursting into tears many a time just to see them all, and *you in the midst of us, all alone* ; and one can hear the clock tick as you speak, it's such a silence. It's very wonderful, I say.'

You are not, dear friend, to suppose, from all I have said, that all the men who join my society were drunkards ; no indeed, we have some most steady, respectable men in our ranks, who wished to throw their influence and support into the good cause, seeing the good that was being done." . . .

TO THE SAME.

"January 27, 1859.

. . . . God is doing wonders amongst us. Charles had such a conversation with —— yesterday, all about Christ. The other day he told me, with great simplicity, of God's goodness to him; he was offended with his *butty* [fellow-workman], and for a moment his anger kindled to such a degree that he felt he must knock him down. 'But,' said he, 'I thought myself of what you said to us the other night, that a man might leave off drinking, but he might still be far from God; he might be letting angry passions get a-head of him. So I thought I'll try and do as she told me to do when we feel all of a hot rage; so I fetched up resolution to look straight off to the Saviour to have mercy of me and give me grace, and that moment I felt so happy like. It wasn't fancy one bit, but the real truth. I could have gone of my knees to have asked my *butty's* pardon for having had such wicked thoughts against him.'

Another time, when talking with ——, I said, 'Really, ——, you seem so gentle always, how was it that you used to be considered a fighting man?'

'Well, ma'am, it wasn't *me*, it was *the drink*.'

Was not this very striking?

He added, 'The men all know what I was, how I

cursed and swore, and fought, and drank. May be they'll listen all the more when I speak to them, for this very reason; because they'll say, This is God's doing; man nor woman couldn't have made him a new man such as I be.'"

"August 1859.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—Did I ever name J. R—— to you? He is a most intelligent man, a shoemaker. I have never heard any one speak with more thankfulness about the meetings. He is always regular in his attendance, and most earnest and attentive.

When I call upon the men, it is difficult sometimes to help spending too much time on secular matters in conversation. One wishes to know, of course, a little of the history and past life of each; and, having intercourse with so large a number, unless some personal facts relative to each can be remembered, it is almost impossible to individualise them.

One day, J. R——, in the nicest way you can imagine, gave me a hint to speak more pointedly on religious subjects in my visits; to invite them especially to the meetings, and to attendance upon a place of worship.

Another time he said to me, 'It strikes me very much how you speak of religion as "*serving God with joyfulness and gladness of heart.*" It has put it in a new light to me. But somehow, I have had a good deal of misery since I began to change my way of life.'

I thought he alluded to trials from temptations to rejoin former companions.

‘No, it’s nothing of that sort, I’m firm enough about that.’

At last, after some difficulty, I gathered from him that the doctrine of election troubled him.

‘Well, dear friend, we can never reconcile how it is that man is a free agent, and yet that God calleth whom He will; we cannot understand how a blade of grass springs up; we cannot look upon the sun when it shines even in moderate brightness; much less must we expect to understand God’s decrees, or why He renders the same gospel to some a “savour of life unto life,” and to others a “savour of death unto death.” God “willeth not the death of a sinner,” therefore, if any are lost, the fault is not in God.’

He was silent, but looked unhappy.

‘Does it trouble you because it is written, “Him that cometh unto me, I will *in no wise* cast out;” and also, “No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him”?’

‘Aye, that’s it. I’ve thought about it a deal.’

‘Well. Leave the last clause alone at present. *Make sure that you come*, and then you will know that the Father *has drawn you*, for you could not come of yourself, could you?’

‘No, that’s sure.’

We talked for an hour, and parted with a deepened regard for each other.

It is very wonderful to see God's work in the heart of man, how He draws the most thoughtless to ponder upon subjects which an archangel's intellect cannot fully grasp.

Another day, I was calling at his house, and we began to speak of the temporal benefits which spring from total abstinence.

I said, laughing, 'I suppose you will sport a pig soon, as well as the others!'

'Just look behind you, ma'am,' said his wife, with a look of great satisfaction; and behold, I saw two sides of bacon and two hams hanging up.

Of course, I admired it; and supposing that they might like to sell some of it, I said, 'I think we ought to patronise some of the temperance bacon,' meaning that we would become purchasers if they wished to sell any.

Upon reaching home, after paying other visits, I found that Mrs R—— had brought a large piece of ham, cut out of the very centre of the leg. Two days after, I called to pay for it, but these grateful, generous people would not hear of such a thing.

'I wish it had been more worthy your acceptance, ma'am, but it was too new.'

'Indeed, it was most delicious, but what a pity to spoil your beautiful ham by giving us the prime piece out of it!'

‘Not at all, you shall have the same out of the other when it’s a bit older. It will be prime in a couple of months.’

I longed for some of the people who say I am giving bribes to have overheard this conversation.

I am constantly receiving presents from the people. William G—— gained prizes for cauliflower, potatoes, and rhubarb, and in great glee brought these vegetables for our acceptance. Alfred P—— went to see his friends in London, and brought me a fine pineapple. John M—— has regularly supplied us with flowers for the drawing-room. It is impossible to enumerate all the kind proofs I have received of friendship and good-will from many others.

There are a good many railway officials in our society, such very nice men, so well conducted, respectful, and orderly, that it is difficult to believe that *any* were drunkards, though a few we know were.

One of these, belonging to the S—— and H—— Railway, was once in the service of the late Archbishop of Canterbury. His quitting the drinking ranks was considered a great calamity by the landlord of the —— public-house; and often, and with a constant zeal worthy of a better cause, did he try to win him back to spend his earnings upon his poisonous liquors.

He tormented him in every possible way, and even went so far as to call him by my name, ‘Mrs. W——,’

to make him look ridiculous in the presence of the other railway officials! At the last races, he was resolved to overcome him, so he shouted out, 'You shall have it, outside or in.' So saying, he poured a jug of ale over C——, from the collar of his coat all down it outside.

'If I ever break the pledge, you may rest assured it shall be a good mile away from *your* house, for I will not be forced by *you* to drink.'*

There are several platelayers, shunters, and two pointsmen, belonging to the Great Western Railway Company, who have joined us. They are all particularly firm and stanch. One of the last-named is become a district-visitor for me in a distant part of the suburbs in which he resides. Now, dearest Caroline, just picture to yourself a man who has to be on duty from six at night till six in the morning every alternate month, and from six in the morning till the same hour at night the other months, and imagine his *offering* to devote any portion of his leisure time to district-visiting! Does it not shame many of our idle people, who have nothing but leisure time, and who, nevertheless, would

* Strange infatuation! this man has since broken, and is constantly drinking at the ——— public-house in spite of all his strong resolutions. What a triumph to the landlord! Lest C—— should come to a better state of mind upon reflection, the landlord goes nearly a mile every day to waylay him as he leaves his work, and thus he makes sure of his victim, who is too good a customer to be easily parted with.

grudge half an hour a-week spent in God's work amongst their poor brothers and sisters of the working-classes? The services of these district-visitors are, of course, gratuitous.

One of the engine-drivers of the S—— and H—— Company is a most intelligent man, and very regular in his attendance at the meetings. The first time I saw him after he signed was one evening at the station, when Dillon L—— took me to meet the train which he drives. He came down for a minute off the engine to speak to me, and everybody being at that moment busy securing their luggage, &c., the singularity of the meeting was not noticed. H. B—— is a most handy man at carpentering, and has framed, without charge, several of the men's temperance cards : his little parlour, which is full of pictures, testifies to his skill in this respect. He is also a very fair gardener and house-painter, and finds endless amusement in the evenings at home with his various ingenious handicrafts.

One Sunday evening, having told my doorkeeper in the school-room that I would act for him that night, as he had been accused of uncourteous conduct, I carried out rather stiffly my own orders of not admitting young children ; and, not recognising H. B——'s little girl, I turned her back. Instead of feeling annoyed with me, which he might have done, because he lives in a suburban district, he said gently to the child, ' There, run home, my dear, you know the way back.' The

child looked ready to cry, but he sent her off, and quietly took his seat in the school-room. I was so distressed when it was told me what I had done, that I went the very next evening to call on him, and to express my regret. 'She came home crying terribly,' said Mrs B——, 'and then sobbed out, I know why Mrs W—— sent me back, mother, it is because I have not signed the pledge!'

H. B—— begged me not to apologise about it for a moment, adding, 'It was very thoughtless of me to bring her; I forgot what you had said about there not being room for children, now that the meetings had grown so large; I ought not to have done it, but she always likes to go every where with me.' I could not help thinking how well it looks when a man is fond of having his little children with him.

Our old friend and parishioner, John J——, who has been a total abstainer many years, and is a member of one of the Welsh chapels here, signed into our society some time ago, because he felt a thorough interest in the progress we are making heavenwards.

He had often encouraged me by his hearty sympathy, and especially by the assurance that his prayers were on our behalf.

One day he said, with a look of delight, 'Your men don't seem to know the meaning of *toffy* and *ginger-bread*.' Asking for an explanation, he said, 'Why, you see, Christians are too apt to get down to the level of

those who don't come up to them in religious feelings, and so they get some popular or amusing speaker to come amongst them to keep up the steam, and to make a bit of excitement, thinking they can't get hold of the people without it; and it does no good. It's just like a foolish nurse always giving the children toffy and gingerbread to keep them good, and yet it doesn't keep them good one bit, it only creates such a fondness for them sweets, that they don't care for wholesome food when they get it, so they become unhealthy. Now, your men are different. *They've* only had the plain wholesome food—they don't know the taste of toffy or gingerbread.' I felt very thankful to John J—— for his illustration; was it not most striking?

It is to the strictly *devotional* tone of our meetings that I attribute all my success, under God. The way that total abstinence societies are conducted, without any religious element, is most objectionable; and I have felt so strongly on this subject, that I have never allowed any temperance advocate to plead the cause in our room.* And when clergymen of ability and piety who have addressed my men, have fallen into the common

* Here I must except Mr Gough, whose presence amongst us I shall consider a *great boon*. When he lectured in Shrewsbury, he was our guest, and we were as much struck by the thoroughly religious tone of his spirit, as by the marvellous eloquence he displayed. He kindly sent me a number of pamphlets, books, and tracts for the men, which are highly appreciated as tokens of his good-will and friendship.

error of supposing that it was necessary to give a temperance address, or rather, to speak against drunkenness, they have greatly disappointed the people, who expected to have heard some simple and beautiful exposition of Scripture, to comfort and strengthen their hearts by presenting Christ and His love before them as the motive to holy living. More than once has this remark been made by a man, 'We didn't want to hear about drunkenness, we know too much about that ourselves, more's the pity—more than any gentleman could tell us.' The fact is, there is so much to speak about on other subjects, that drunkenness need never be mentioned unless it happens to come in the portion of Scripture, which is rare; for it seems an insult to their common sense to be always harping upon a sin which they have given up, and are resolved to abstain from, God helping them. And they all know there are plenty of other sins equally dangerous to their eternal interests. They know that a man may be a total abstainer and yet live without God, and thus be lost for ever."



CHAPTER X.

The Race Week.

“Unclasp, O man, the syren hand of pleasure,
Let the gay folly go !
A few quick years will bring the unwelcome ending ;
Then whither dost thou go ?
To endless joy or woe ?

“Clasp a far truer hand, a kinder, stronger,
Of Him, the crucified ;
Let in a deeper love into thy spirit,
The love of Him who died,
And now is glorified.”

“FRIDAY, April 8, 1859.

DEAREST CAROLINE, — This is the race week. I took for my subject on Tuesday night Deut. xxviii. 47, 48, ‘Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies, which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.’ Three heads—

I. God’s claim on us, ‘The Lord THY God.’

II. To be served with ‘*joyfulness and gladness of heart*,’ true hearty service.

III. If we serve Him not *thus*, our sin, like a yoke of iron, shall bind us to a more *cruel service*. Sin its own punishment.

First, I took *the whole* in reference to Israel’s history, which is, indeed, full of instruction to us all, [twenty minutes’ address,] wishing to set before them the HAPPINESS of God’s service, the PERFECT FREEDOM of it, and how vain it is to seek joy INDEPENDENT OF HIM. I never hinted about the races on this occasion.

A strong appeal was made for God's claim to us, 'Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price.' It was encouraging to see that all in the room, by their earnest attention, and looks of deep interest, felt the force and truth of all that was said. The room was very full.

It was well known that William L—— and Jacob S—— were going to the race-course next day to distribute tracts, and that John T—— and others were to be constables there. I felt and said it is good to be *at work* in the midst of temptations, but *not to be idle* and *seeking our pleasure* in it.

Next day, a dozen men went to see the horses run, besides those above-named, who went on business. Just at half-past six, P.M., the tract-distributors returned, and told me that all the men had gone home right except R. ——, one of our stanchest members; that he had said, 'Drink I'll have this very day,' though up to the time they last saw him he had not fulfilled his threat. My heart failed me on hearing this. I put on my bonnet at once, fagged and tired as I was with five hours' work out-of-doors, and went straightway to his house, which was half a mile off. On my way, I called on John V——, who had also been on the race-course, and there had my fears corroborated. He had longed to speak to him, 'but,' said he, 'he'd got a companion sticking close to him, who had hopes of getting every farthing off him; so I

couldn't get alone with Dick to warn him as I wanted to.' I then went on to R——'s house, found his wife standing by a neighbour's house, waiting for Mr ——, curate of St ——'s, who was going to give a cottage lecture there. I told her my fears. She was terribly upset. 'I've had perfect comfort for twenty-two weeks,' said she, during which time her husband had never missed church twice every Sunday, and the readings. R. —— has eleven children at home; the eldest is a daughter twenty-one years of age, the youngest an infant. The landlord of the 'S——,' a public-house in our parish, has been obliged to retire because R—— gave up drinking; for by R——'s steadfastness, twelve men, who used to spend a good portion of their earnings at the same place, have all joined my ranks, and held on firmly. I knew, therefore, that R—— could not fall *alone*; it was like a standard-bearer fainting.

I had to hurry home then for our eight o'clock service. We had a first-rate attendance of my men and women. It was encouraging, especially on a night of such drunkenness; bands of music in abundance in the streets. I felt comforted, chiefly, in seeing the members who work with R—— present. All the people waited to speak to me after the service. I gave and sold tickets for Mr Gough's lecture to those who had not taken any before. The sorrow on every face for R. ——'s fall comforted and reassured me.

Next day, after working amongst our sick till one

o'clock, the heat overpowered me, so I gladly rested till half-past three, when I went to R. ——'s, leaving word at home that I should not return till nine o'clock. There were sixteen houses to visit that evening; and though I was very tired on my return, yet I slept till seven next morning without once waking, thank God for His sustaining power.

I had a long and earnest talk with R. ——; but oh, *how* unsatisfactory! He said little. His fine face was flushed. The demon, drink, was in him. He had *exceeded* on the previous night, and the thirst for more possessed him.

'I mean to be a moderate drinker for the future.'

'You *cannot be*, dear friend; believe me, *you* cannot be.'

'Yes, ma'am, but I can, if I make up my mind. I've got a strong resolution; and I say that I'll attend church just the same as ever. But I can't *work* without drink.'

'You are not yourself to-day. I do not want you to return to my ranks by any persuasion of mine. TRY AND BE A MODERATE DRINKER IF YOU WILL.'

'I mean to try, ma'am.'

'*Do so*; but, take my word for it, you will break down over and over again, and then you will be ashamed to come to church. Oh! R——, I am so unhappy! You have grievously disheartened me. You will not fall alone. Remember how I have spoken to you

about the *influence* we all possess. G. H—— will be the next to fall, for he looked up so to you; and, perhaps, a dozen more firm ones will now go back to sin.'

All this while he was silent.

'Better a thousand times, dear friend, suffer *inconvenience* now, and have good hopes of overcoming through Christ, and of joining us in glory, than to go back to be a drunkard now for the sake of a short-lived gratification, and have to suffer eternal remorse and shame hereafter.'

He groaned.

'*You know* that *total* abstinence cannot injure your health; it may *inconvenience* you, and it *will* do so during the first hot days, but in the end you will feel the heat less, and be less thirsty.'

I saw he was relenting. I was resolved not to push matters further, but appealed to his conscience and spoke of his Saviour whom he had grieved. Then I spoke of his children, especially the lad who sat by him, one of my juvenile band of teetotallers, aged seventeen, and of the sad example he was setting the children. Young R—— looked up with eyes full of tears.

'He was sadly cut up by me being drunk last night, and talked so to me this morning.'

'And yet you can make up your mind to go on drinking! Oh, R——, you may do him a lasting in-

jury by your example now ; you may lay in your son the foundation of a similar process of sin to your own present course. Your reasoning, all false as it is, may be used by him to defend his own backsliding another day.'

'Do, dear father, *do PLEASE, please do* sign again,' said the eldest daughter, aged twenty-one years, so earnestly.

I left, shaking hands with him as usual.

'May I still come to see you sometimes ? shall I be welcome ?'

He nearly cried.

I went on from them from house to house, drinking a cup of tea at Margaret's mother's (our house-maid) ; and John D—— walked home from the —— Bridge with me at the close of my work. He is the man who served six years in India when in the 53d Regiment.

At every house R. ——'s fall was deplored as a calamity to our society. To cut a long story short, this morning his wife came in great sorrow. I had not seen her last night. She cried, and said, 'He'll come back. He got drunk again last night, and now he's come to his-self, and says, "She spoke truth ; I *canna* be moderate." And,' she added, 'G. H—— broke out last night, and lay in the gutter as you passed D—— Row ; and the boys hooted at him, and our young Dick was *that sorry* for

him he brought him to our house. And when my husband seed him, he was cut up terribly, for he said, "She told me G. would be the next to go, and now she'll say that I 'ticed him." And it so vexed him he took G. home his-self; and he was that hurt in his feelings he went to the "P——" and drank, and he came home tipsy.'

Whilst she was telling me this, R. ——'s massive figure appeared at the open front door, bringing me G. H——. G.'s face was bruised, and clotted with blood. R. —— looked haggard and ill. Neither of them attempted to speak; they turned their faces away. I took them by the hand and led them into the dining-room, and we had a most touching scene. G. H—— could not speak a word, beyond, 'I broke because *he* had; I cared for nobody else; when he was gone, I didn't care to stop in the society.' He added, 'I'd give £5 if I hadn't broke, *for your sake*,' meaning me.

R. ——'s contrition and humility almost overcame me. He thought it so wonderful I should have gone after him yesterday. His self-confidence had fled; his moderate-drinking theory had vanished too. He said, 'I can't drink moderately; it's no use. I got drunk again last night; it will be the death of me, body and soul, and *I can't stand that*.'

So, after saying much that was most hearty in his sorrow as regarded hurting my feelings, he besought

me to receive them again, adding, 'We'll never touch a drop of drink again so long as we live.'

I went to my room after they left, and, after an outburst of tears, knelt down to pour out my heart to God. Thank God, teetotalism, the Sunday services, and school-room meetings have *not* been in vain. The falls, the very breakings down of these fine honest men, God overrules for good; it has brought out so much hearty feeling towards me on all sides. Instead of injuring my society, it has been overruled even to strengthen these very men, and to shew them and the others that those who have been heavy drinkers cannot be *moderate*. The ways of peace, the constant attendance at church, are, in the end, vindicated rather than spoken against. Having tasted the blessings of a right course of action, they really feel themselves to be worse than outcasts when they leave off joining in our public assemblies.

Indeed, there is so much pathos in my work, so much to touch the heart, and to interest me, and stir me up to pray! You see how my joys and trials balance one another. Having got hold of the hearts of these people, one does not lose them entirely, even when they break.

John V—— said yesterday to me, 'I took my drink with me to the races;' saying this, he took out of his pocket something smaller than a bean.

'Is that a lozenge?'

‘No, ma’am, it’s a pebble stone! When I puts that in my mouth it soon makes my mouth water, and I feels independent of all them drinks, such as lemon-ade and pop.’

Telling this to Jacob S—— afterwards, he said gravely, ‘Yes; it’s wonderful the *moisture in them stones!*’”

It is satisfactory to state that R. —— and G. H—— continue as steadfast as any in our ranks.

During the unusually hot weather, R. —— and J. B—— worked in the hayfield to the thorough satisfaction of their employer, who has acknowledged the advantage of temperance principles by raising their wages. These men continued their work *without* stimulants, when the other haymakers who took drink to strengthen them were, in the early afternoon, *hors de combat*—prostrate on the field!

It will be interesting to close this chapter with an incident which occurred some months after, in which R. —— acted an honourable part. Y——, the landlord of the T——’s R——, (a public-house) was so exasperated at the loss of his gains, by the prevalence of total abstinence principles, and the firmness of the men who held them, that he occasionally annoyed them when passing his house. At last he severely handled a woman belonging to our society, who, upon receiving a due apology from Y——, passed over the

offence. Y—— had for some weeks tried to get R. —— to drink, and upon failing, he aggravated him every time he passed the door to his work. At last, on Monday, August 15, Y—— suddenly assaulted him, and roughly seizing him by the collar and arm, demanded payment of a debt which had been duly discharged long ago. R. ——, with extraordinary self-command, simply remonstrated, denying the charge. As both the men are above the usual height, and powerful in proportion, the whole street turned out to see a fight. But R. —— coolly shook off his opponent, saying—"I'll make you remember this." He went straightway to his work, and relating the circumstances in the yard, the foreman, a man of established character, encouraged him in his intention to get a summons. I conversed with R. —— shortly after, and was struck with the nice spirit in which he spoke on the subject. When urged by some parties afterwards to withdraw the summons, he held firm to it, saying—"It's time to stop these insults. I don't feel a bit against Y—— myself, but I'm resolved to go through with it for the good of our cause." In this I felt it my duty to encourage him.

On the day appointed for the hearing of the case, John V—— and a lad aged 14, son of Richard B——, a member, appeared as witnesses for R. —— . While the case was going on, John T—— rushed into our drawing-room breathless—

"Please, ma'am, do you know where R. — was on Sunday at half-past eleven?"

"Of course I do, he was at church."

"Did *you* see him there?"

"I did, and could name the men who sat with him."

"Well then, Y—— has brought a publican, who swears that Dick was standing aggravating him on Sunday at half-past eleven o'clock, shaking his purse at him, and he's got a lawyer there to defend him."

"Do they want a witness, John?"

"Yes, they do, ma'am—they can't find the men as sat by Dick, they've sent all over the town to see—and they've adjourned the case."

"Then will you go back to the Town-hall, and tell them they shall have a witness immediately—I'll come myself."

I remembered suddenly that Mr L——, our curate, would be as good a witness as myself, my husband being out of town; so I sent to know if he would kindly go for me, which he most willingly did, and the affair was soon settled. In the meanwhile I went to await the issue in a shop close by. F——, the false-witness, was indicted for perjury; Y—— was fined £1, 11s., and received a severe reprimand and warning from the magistrates. It was with most hearty congratulations I shook hands with R. — as he came out of the Town-hall. Several of the members were with him—no one considered it for a moment a personal

matter, but looked on him as the champion of our cause.

"He's been put out a good bit with me," said R. —, "because he says I've ruined him. By me standing, a good many who drank have joined our ranks, and stood firm too. It's time we should work for our wives and families, and not for the publicans."

"You'll see Dick — will be stanch for life; this will strengthen him above a bit," said J. R. — to me afterwards.

"It's a good job Y — fixed on *him* to fight out our battle with the publicans; he couldn't have hit to a better man than Dick —," said Charles W —. It was satisfactory to learn that R. — went quietly to his work for the rest of the day; and he took a ramble by the river side to "talk it over" with a few chosen friends after tea.

It is a significant fact, that no police report for Shrewsbury appeared in the local newspapers that week, although the reports appeared for all the smaller towns in the county! Nothing could exceed the kindness of the magistrates on the occasion.

CHAPTER XI.

Our First Death and Burial.

“ 'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose
Friends out of sight, in faith to muse
How grows in Paradise our store.”



" May 18, 1859.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—We little thought when Stedman was so weak and ill in January, that he could have rallied for six weeks sufficiently to have attended church and the meetings again. I never saw anything more touching than his anxiety never to miss the means of grace. On February 27th he came to his first communion; he would have come long before, but was each time unavoidably prevented. I shall never forget him on that occasion; six of the men attended the same communion. Charles W—— and C. T—— sat with Stedman during the service, and they knelt together at the table. After the people had gone out of church, these three men waited, with earnest, tearful faces, to shake hands with me, their voices choked with emotion. A fervent 'God bless you' was all we could say.

In April it was evident that Stedman could not be long with us.

According to his expressed wish, a simple will was drawn up, leaving everything he possessed in my hands and Charles W——'s, whom he had always loved as his own brother.

I spent much time daily with him, but he seemed to have a settled sorrow upon his heart. You know his domestic trials after his dear wife's death were very great.

Sometimes he would, with tears, speak of his dear little boys; but I begged him to cast all care about them on Jesus, and to trust me, for I would look after them as affectionately and faithfully as if they were my own brother's children.

It was the will of God that his mind should be greatly overcast; he was not himself for the last three weeks, during which time he kept his bed; he would fancy people were in the room with him, and sometimes thought that his mother was beside him.

He always knew me, and would hold my hand firmly all the time I stayed with him. I generally stopped three or four hours by his bedside. In the midst of all his wanderings, a text of Scripture would recall his thoughts, and he would join in prayer.

When I gave him a tea-spoonful of wine, he would not touch it unless plentifully mixed with water. 'Not take it too strong—that would never do; no, never must get drunk again.' He said this on several occasions. It proved how thorough was the sin-

cerity with which he gave up his once besetting sin, when, even in this time of utter weakness of mind *and body*, he could not lose sight of his horror of drunkenness.

The earliest members and their wives loved and respected him: this they evinced by sitting up with him at nights, and when I proposed a paid nurse, they were willing to raise the money amongst themselves; but this was not needed, as they continued to take charge of him to the last. Did I tell you that, on two occasions when Stedman lost a pig by death, these men privately made a subscription amongst themselves to defray his loss?

It was on Sunday, May 8th, that C. Thomas called early to tell me that Stedman had entered into his rest that morning at two o'clock. I mentioned it at our reading at night, and expressed a wish that as many as could should attend his funeral.

On the following Wednesday, at four o'clock, fifty men assembled in our school-room (many more would have come if they could possibly have been spared from their work), and they walked to the place from which the funeral started, in order to join in procession. He belonged to the Ancient Order of Foresters.

It was just fourteen months since I had followed his dear wife to the grave. Then only Stedman and I were present, besides the bearers. It was touching on this occasion to see the two dear little orphan boys stand-

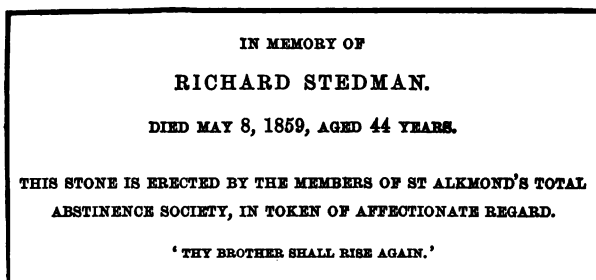
ing by their father's grave in the midst of a large company.

We invited all the members who were present to our school-room, where tea and cake was provided for them. It occurred to us, that it would be only kind and thoughtful to provide some refreshment for them in another form to the one so prevalent at funerals where drunkenness is specially indulged in ; for we knew that the men had not had time to get their evening meal before joining us, and it is a long walk to the cemetery.

Charles and I were present at their tea, and all united in a hymn and prayer afterwards.

The whole party then broke up ; and, in an hour's time all assembled, together with many of their wives, in church (it being our lecture-evening), where a special sermon was preached by my husband.

Thus, we laid the body of our beloved brother to rest, doing what honour we could to his memory. I gave each member a funeral card with Stedman's name and age on it, and for a motto our blessed Lord's words, 'I am the resurrection and the life ;' and, on the following Tuesday night, I told them that it would gratify me if we could put up a stone upon his grave, with a nice inscription on it. During the last few days I have received £2, 3s. from seventy-five members towards it. Charles W—— and I fixed on a suitable design, and the stone is now being prepared. The inscription is simple :—



Before six weeks had passed, we again stood at the same spot in our cemetery, in front of a little grave for a child not quite seven years old.

Darling little Dicky, Stedman's eldest boy, gradually faded away from the time of his father's death. I had placed the children at our beautiful House of Industry, under the kind care of the governor, until they could be received as inmates of an orphan asylum in Bristol. The medical man who attended Dicky for fever said, that the dear child could not have lived many weeks longer, even if spared the attack which laid him low, for his little lungs were deeply diseased. I saw him during his brief illness, and he again told me he was not afraid to die. 'Where is your father?'

'With Jesus.'

'Don't you long to see him?'

'Yes; I do!'

The next time I visited him he did not know me. I kissed his sweet face for the last time. Thus, God

took this little lamb and early folded him. Four of our school-boys carried him to the grave, my husband read the service, and Charles W—— and I attended, together with our friend Emma G—— and dear little Willie, Stedman's youngest child, a rosy cherub not four years old. 'God bless the lad!'

'He loves to have the little ones
Upon His lap quite close and near;
And thus their glass so swiftly runs,
And they so little while are here;
He gave ——, He takes them when He thinks it best
For them to come to Him and take their rest.'"

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CHAPTER XII.

Encouragements and Discouragements.

“ Go labour on ! 'tis not for nought,
All earthly loss is heavenly gain !
Men heed thee not, men praise thee not ;
The Master praises ! what are men ?

“ Go labour on ! thy hands are weak,
Thy knees are faint, thy soul cast down ;
Yet falter not,—the prize is near,
The throne, the kingdom, and the crown !

“ Toil on, toil on ; thou soon shall find
For labour rest, for exile home ;
Soon shalt thou hear the Bridegroom's voice,
The midnight peal, ‘ Behold, I come.’ ”

“DEAREST CAROLINE,—I am going to tell you some of our encouragements and discouragements. It is so strange the ignorance that exists on two points, on which I am constantly battled with by sensible and educated persons—1st, The risk to a man’s health by leaving off drinking suddenly; 2d, The foolishness of total abstinence, instead of moderate drinking, for those who have been drunkards.

The other day, I had a conversation with a most respectable chemist, to whom I applied for some simple wholesome recipe for a summer beverage in the place of the effervescing drinks, such as ginger-beer and soda-water, which I think impoverish the blood. He recommended clove-tea—boiling water poured over cloves. Speaking of total abstinence, he repeated the old story, ‘It is injurious to a man who has been a hard drinker to leave it off suddenly. You should get them to do it gradually until they become moderate drinkers.’ I could not help smiling, for I knew I was in for an argument.

‘But it is not injurious to leave it off suddenly. I have heard it from the chaplain of our county gaol, who has known hundreds of men leave off drinking *and*

smoking at one stroke, without being at all the worse. On the contrary, their health greatly improved by the regular nourishment taken daily in the place of the intoxicating drink.'

'Oh, I can understand that, ma'am. It is quite a different thing, for with them it was compulsory.'

This answer almost upset my gravity. 'Indeed! I think it ought to have told upon their health twice as much when it was compulsory. Again, the prison diet must have tried them greatly; and also, how full of sorrow they must have felt at the very circumstance of not having their liberty! In my opinion, if it can be proved that sudden total abstinence does not injure a man *in prison*, it may fairly be said that the fact is established that it never would injure a man under *any* circumstances. Of course, those who are put into prison are special drunkards. Except for that fatal habit, they would probably never have been committed.'

My friend, finding this argument fail, plied the other. 'But why not get them gradually to leave off drinking till they can drink moderately? There is no reason for being a teetotaller.'

Now, dearest Caroline, what am I to do? There is not a man scarcely in my ranks who can stop at the first half-pint. They tell me so themselves, and they dread the first taste as a burnt child would dread the fire. If I had any difficulty in getting them to abandon the first glass, there would be some sense, perhaps, in

people thinking that I am interfering with their liberty and their enjoyment, which many say I do. But my men are common sense, practical men ; and they know, and are fully convinced by experience (which is the best teacher for wise men), that those who have been in the habit of drinking to excess cannot stop *when they will*, for they lose the power of self-control when they drink their first glass. The power of *will* is then gone. It is a physical law of their condition, that the first taste revives the thirst for more. I could not get Mr —— to enter into my views on this subject, so I left the matter. If he had conversed as often, and with as deep an interest as I have done, with men who experimentally know, to their cost, the full truth of my statement, or if he had witnessed the breaking down of some of these fine fellows as often with tasting the first glass, he would indeed agree with me.

A policeman in my ranks told me one day, 'There's no one gets more temptation to drink than we do. The publicans seem resolved that *we* shall be drunkards, whatever other men may be.'

'Of course they do ; it is very natural. They want you to be dumb dogs !'

He laughed, and said, 'It is not long since, when I was on my night-rounds, a respectable tradesman [he gave me his name] waylaid me, near a public-house, and asked me to go in and have a glass with him. I declined. He went in alone for a minute, but soon

returned, and plied me again strongly. I told him I was much obliged, but I didn't drink. Not satisfied, he began to be importunate; but I was firm, and told him my sergeant will be up with me directly, and I would rather not drink. Well, ma'am, the very next night he was in the very same spot, and began at me again. I felt, then, that *a plot was up*, but I was resolved not to be taken in, so I wouldn't go in with him, or let him get over me in any way. At last he got quite angry with me; but I told him I did not care for that, for I WOULD NOT DRINK. I never saw a man more angry than he got.'

You see, these fine, firm fellows get tempted by those above them in position; and the want of sympathy from the upper classes is a sore grievance to them. A shoemaker related to me the following conversation he had with a clergyman:—

'Well, Jack, how are you?'

'Quite well, thank you, sir.'

'It's never true you've joined those foolish tee-totallers, is it?'

'And why shouldn't I, sir? I was as bad as any one was.'

'Why, I thought you were always a respectable man.'

'How could that be, when I used to be reeling about of Sundays?'

Then Jack expressed his thankfulness for the blessings of total abstinence. And the clergyman made a

long speech in favour of moderate drinking, which my friend appreciated because it was kindly intentioned ; but as he said to me, 'What was the use of it to *me*, ma'am, I couldn't dare to take a *first glass*, that I'm sure of !' The clergyman then condemned teetotalism as a great sin. 'How is it, ma'am,' said Jack, 'that when I was reeling about of Sundays, or else lying on the bed ill with the effects of the drink, that he never spoke to me then about *drunkenness* ; but now that I go to church *twice every Sunday*, that he should find fault with me for being a teetotaller ?' He added with emphasis, in relating this to me, 'To think that he should talk thus to me, who hadn't been to church except once or twice a year since I was a lad !' That man had more common sense than his educated friend.

Jack is a great favourite of mine ; a more sensible, kind-hearted man does not exist.

I have told you before, I think, that the shoemakers are especially intelligent men. One evening I found him in very low spirits at home alone. On questioning him about the cause, he answered, 'The fact is, *I'm discouraged*. When I was drinking and disorderly, nobody found fault with me—they all said I was a good fellow ; but now they think me past all hope, because I'm a teetotaller, and go to church twice every Sunday. I'm too religious now ! It's not my companions that say this, but those above me, the gentlefolks ; *it's they who discourage me.*'

We had a long talk. I told him *my* troubles—that nobody here sympathised with me in my work except a *very* few religious friends—that some thought me too strict in religion, others thought the total abstinence part of my work absurd or wrong—that a clergyman had told me most kindly that I was doing ‘positive mischief’—in short, almost every one thought me the most foolish person in Shrewsbury, one who was being taken in at every step; but I assured Jack that I did not feel a bit discouraged so long as my men held on firmly, and their wives helped them to do so, and family comforts and blessings were entering many a once desolate home. I said, ‘Eternity will shew whether I did my work to be seen of men, or to save souls for the love of Christ; and those who now despise or find fault, may then wish with all their hearts that they had done something similar.’ Jack began to feel comforted by forgetting his sorrows in listening to mine. We agreed that *no* religious work ever yet was, or could be, popular, and that God’s people were by nature as full of mistakes and prejudices as others.

Jack looked very thoughtful. ‘Don’t you think, ma’am, that the magistrates are very strange in their way of setting things to rights? You see, ma’am, they’re ready to licence the public-houses, and you just look how they’ve increased;* but then they will

* It should be mentioned, to the credit of the Shrewsbury magistrates, that they have for some time resolutely refused to grant any

punish a poor fellow for doing anything wrong through drink, though he doesn't know what he did, doesn't remember it because he was drunk. Isn't that punishing the *effect*, but letting the *cause* alone?'

I thought I would have given any thing if the magistrates could have heard Jack's good common sense and sound reasoning; good, because so true. You will not wonder that the clock struck ten before I left Jack's house.

I was calling on ———, who has been a patient of the infirmary lately, but had now come home. I only saw his wife, as John was at his work. She said very earnestly to me, 'I do hope my husband will be able to do without the porter which the doctor recommends, I'm so afraid of his *beginning* to take anything of the sort.'

'You may well be afraid; some of my stanchest men have been broken down by their medical man ordering porter, brandy, or ale. I would rather suffer any inconvenience than run a risk of falling, if I were your husband.'

A few days after, I called again; ——— had a beautiful basin of good pease-soup before him for his dinner. 'I've been wanting to see you greatly. I've gone on so far without the porter, and I mean to try on; but Dr ——— says that it is necessary in a *town* to

new licences whatever. Considering that *every fifteenth house throughout the town is a drinking-house*, it is high time this should be done.

take porter or ale. He says that if he lived in the pure country air, he could do without it, but he couldn't in Shrewsbury.'

'*Has he ever tried?* because, if he has not, he speaks without foundation. I thought that it would be impossible for *me* to do without a glass of wine or porter daily, and I certainly missed it terribly the first few weeks, I felt so ill without it; but now fifteen months have passed, I can say with confidence that I never enjoyed such uninterrupted health. I have been A YEAR independent of any medical advice, thank God for His mercy*—a new thing to me for seventeen years!'

'Dr —— says that porter will strengthen me.'

'Your last doctor, Mr F——, whom you liked so much, thought you were better without porter.'

'Yes, ma'am, he did; he is a very nice gentleman.'

'Do what you think best; but, believe me, porter cannot *nourish* you, because it contains nothing which can supply the daily loss of fibre and muscle which you sustain. It *may stimulate* you. If you were tired, and wanted to do extra work, a dram might help you to do it by stimulating the nerves and brain; but it would be a mistake therefore to conclude that you were strengthened. At the end of your extra labour, you would be much in the same condition as a jaded

* So weak was I in health for a great part of that time, that if I walked out a second time any day, I had to spend the next day in bed. Frequently for two months at a time I was utterly prostrate. It will be remembered how often I used to faint in church, &c.

horse, which, when wearied, instead of having rest and food allowed it, had a smart whip and spur applied, which made it go on working.'

'You speak the truth, ma'am,' said the wife, who had been an intelligent listener; 'I consider that it is the brain and nerves only that is stimulated, and that it gives no strength.'

"Well, ma'am," said —, 'Dr — said that you was a very kind lady, and that no doubt you was doing a great deal of good; but he holds to it that it is necessary in the bad air of a town to take some stimulant.'*

Indeed, dearest Caroline, it was very hard not to feel wrath at the moment with the learned physician for supplying a working-man with such absurd reasoning in the face of facts, those stubborn things. There is hardly a town in England now where the hardest workers and strongest men are not teetotallers. In the iron works at Wolverhampton, the BEST men in *physique* and *morale* are total abstainers. The same, too, may be proved in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, &c. It is really quite grotesque to suppose that in our little town of 22,000 inhabitants teetotalism is impracticable for sanitary reasons!

* A month after, —'s wife said to me in much concern, "I *do wish* you could see my husband, and speak to him; the porter does him no good; he acknowledges it. Yet the other day a friend took him into S——'s liquor-vaults, and he drank three pints of porter, and it being hot weather, and he being weak, he came home *staggering*." Alas for Dr —'s advice!

In my ranks there are smiths, iron-moulders, nail-ors, and others working with a hot fire at all seasons; their testimony satisfies me that a man, when totally abstaining [after the first trying month is over], gradually finds that he is less thirsty, he suffers less from heat, has a more even appetite, and is capable of doing more work with less fatigue, his powers of endurance being strengthened. One and all agree in two things—the clearing of their intellectual powers, and the refreshing sleep they get at nights. A labourer said to me one day, ‘I never get the headache now, and I sleep like a baby of nights. I feel *my head clear for God, and for my earthly master, and that’s more than I could ever say before.*’ This man was not a drunkard.

Mrs John —, in speaking of the change in her husband, told me some facts about his past life: —‘Of a Show-Monday he used to come in *furiously*, and would break up everything in the house. Many a time have I and the little ones had to stand in our night-clothes outside the house; he turned us many a time into the street, and swore we should never come in again. Nobody ever had such a life as he led me. I have cause to go down of my knees to you, and to bless the ground you tread upon. Nobody could be kinder than he’s got now. He was always kind when he was sober, but drink made him mad and brutal, and he was always drinking. I have had seven months of peace; and this Show-Monday, for all he had a holi-

day, and did not think it right to spend the money away from me and the children by going to Liverpool in your trip, he never made me uneasy for a moment ; he kept near about home all day, as contented and happy as possible, and kept looking forward to next year, when, by God's blessing, we shall be a bit straighter ; and he says we can all go together perhaps, and that would be better than going by himself, and leaving me and the children at home this year.'

Dearest C——, is not this noble-hearted man's changed state a richer reward to me than the approval of all the good people in Shrewsbury ?

I said to her, 'Why didn't you let me know he could not afford a ticket ?'

She answered, 'He wouldn't have accepted one off you for anything ; he was afraid to let you know it lest you should give him one. He said, "She has spent too much among us already."'

I wish everybody who doubts the truthfulness of my men as teetotallers could see behind the scenes as I do. Their discouragements are very many and varied, and come from most unlooked-for sources.

A labourer whom I have named before as having been some years in India, where he buried his wife and little ones in Cawnpore, told me one day, 'My master is quite put out with me for joining the pledge ; he says he has no patience with me about it, and yet he turned off a man the other day for drunkenness !'

It is to me more wonderful that any stand firm than that some break. A man has first to stand a fire of ridicule, some for a longer, some a shorter period. Next he has bravely, and with a clear head, to look ugly facts in the face, such as ale-scores or other debts. Some of the men are deeply in debt for rent; others have confessed, after having paid them off, to having had upwards of fifty pawn-tickets on hand. These debts are all discharged honestly, and it makes the first twelve months of a teetotaler's life very stern, hard work. Can you wonder at my *honouring them with all my heart*, and feeling a stronger tie of friendship towards them than I ever could do to people in my own position? (a few excepted, of course.) The high sense of honour I have witnessed in many cases is beyond anything I ever saw before in any class. I have heard of beautiful acts of self-denial after they were over, which they had scrupulously kept from me lest I should give money to relieve them, and of which I should have remained in ignorance to this day if it had not been necessary to explain why they were not as liberal at a collection as they wished to be.

Often, as soon as a respectable appearance was gained at great cost of self-denial, they have been discouraged by being called upon to pay three years arrears of improvement-rates, and poor-rates, at the same time that other families residing in the same street, and in houses of similar rent, were excused; the

parish authorities judging, by the changed appearance of these fine fellows and their families, that they were able to pay. I have had to beg for a gentle dealing in such cases. I do not remember one instance in which a man wished the claim withdrawn—they only interceded for *time*, and to be allowed to pay it by *instalments*,—a request always granted; but I mention these facts to shew how much such honest-hearted, self-reliant men deserve our warm sympathy and love, and how wrong it is to judge of a man's poverty by his appearance. Often a ragged family gets Christmas gifts and other charities, when the father is earning good wages and spending it in drink. And his next door neighbour, who presents a respectable appearance, is passed over; whereas he may be getting a very moderate rate of wages a-week, and the struggle to pay every honest debt is unseen and unheeded. I am quite sure *rags*, *dirt*, and *sin* go together. I knew a man in Liverpool, a teetotaller, who was very hardly dealt with in similar circumstances to those just named. Permission to pay the improvement and poor-rates by instalment was not granted. Instant execution would have been put into his house, which he had gradually filled with pretty furniture and pictures, (he was a joiner, and in his leisure evenings made all the things himself,) if he had not found suddenly a kind friend to lend him the sum wanted. It almost broke his heart to borrow the money. He is now in very different circumstances, and said,

when addressing my men one night lately, 'The two first years in a working-man's experience as teetotaller are the hardest in his life—it is all struggle, and he gets very little, if any, sympathy. But, ONCE STRAIGHT, he soon gets independent of everybody.'

I wish all the masters were like Mr C——, the tanner; three of his men are in my ranks. D——, the pensioner, one of them, said to me the other day, 'Master is so kind and good to us, and encourages us his best to keep teetotal. No beer comes up our yard now, he gives it us in money instead.' Last Christmas, one of his men, who has since left the town, declined joining our tea-party. I was very anxious all should come, if possible, and therefore pressed him to give me a reason why he could not come. Was it that his master could not spare him? At last, with great reluctance, he said, 'Master gave us all a supper, and I stayed away lest the drinking should make me break the pledge, and I don't like to ask leave to come to your tea-party, it would look so to go to the one when I wouldn't go to the other.' I called on Mr C—— and told him the circumstances. He was not aware the man was a teetotaller; at that time no other man in his employment had joined my ranks, and he wondered at B—— declining to attend his supper. He felt so much pleased with him for the reason he gave, that he presented him with 1s. 6d. to pay for his ticket for our tea-drinking, which B—— shewed me with a

broad smile of satisfaction the next evening we met at the night-school.

This is not the only instance of a man declining a supper or dinner where a chance of breaking the pledge was apprehended. When we consider how seldom a working-man has an opportunity of taking a social meal in comfort and leisure, it is a wonderful test of his sincerity and truthfulness.

When our trip to Liverpool was being arranged, (by way of presenting a counter-attraction to the men on Show-Monday and Tuesday), D—— declined taking a ticket. ‘It’s not the money, I could afford that, but the master is so good and kind to us, I couldn’t ask for a holiday.’

‘But every one gives a holiday on Show-Monday, and you could return home the same day if you liked.’

‘Indeed, I should like to go; but I would rather go on with the work, there’s not such a good master as our’s to be had anywhere.’

‘I will ask leave for you.’

‘Oh no! please, ma’am, don’t; he’ll think I’ve set you on to do so, and that would be all one as if I asked myself. I couldn’t bear to treat one who is so good to us in that way.’”

“ June 1859.

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—One of the most trying things in the world, at least I am foolish enough some-

times to be made unhappy by it, is the remark repeated to me so often, 'You are being taken in on all sides'—'Your men are deceiving you; they are drinking slyly, and making fun of you.' Now, these speeches do not for a moment shake my confidence in the *good* men, nor do they make me discouraged in the least about those of whom I know little that is to their credit. But it is disagreeable to feel and know that one is reckoned a good-natured dupe by everybody! Do they think that any reasonable person would expect to find any community on earth without some black sheep in it? Was there not a Judas among *the twelve*? Now, when a notoriously bad person joins my society, I cannot express to you the intense interest I feel for that man or woman. Even when the members have thought it necessary to caution me about such an one, I have felt and said, 'It is just such persons I want to get hold of.' Facts of their past life are related to me by way of putting me on my guard. These facts, instead of eliciting any horror or indignation on my part, make me more resolved to grasp at that man or woman's soul; and with an earnest heart that 'beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things,' I am the more resolved, if there be salvation in Christ Jesus for the worst, such an one shall not be lost. People watch me following the hopelessly bad, as they call some of these persons, and then say, 'You are being taken in.' No; my eyes are wide open. I

feel as if I had looked into heaven and into hell ; and if God will hearken to the poor prayers of a sinner like me, for Jesus Christ's sake, and give me strength of body and mind to work hard, lovingly, and affectionately, and faith to pray without ceasing, nothing shall discourage me,—no amount of ingratitude in any man or woman shall make me cease to pray for any on whose salvation I have set my heart. Of course, the easy-going people, who form the largest number even of our regular attendants at church, who never lost their appetite from anxiety about the state of their own, or any one else's soul, must regard me as a hopeless enthusiast or dupe ; but it cannot be helped, I must be content to be thought one.

A lady said one day to me, 'You must have great courage and boldness.'

'What for?' said I.

'To speak to those rough, bad men.'

'But I do not find them such ; no one is otherwise than courteous and gentle to me amongst them.'

'It must require great courage.'

'No, it does not—it requires *love*, and that's a thing few people possess for their poor brothers and sisters ; I cannot account for it, but *I love them with all my heart, and they know it.*'

'Well, I am afraid of working-men ; if one happens to enter a cottage in my district, I walk out at once.'*

* Another elderly lady, who is a district-visitor, has since told me

‘If you saw a house on fire, would you have courage to tell the inmates of their danger?’

‘Indeed, I don’t think I should; I should be so frightened—I should get away from the place.’

I did not envy her. But I must not criticise, for nobody could have been more stupid and timid than I was at first.

We have often laughed at my first start at *night-visiting* in Butcher Row. After Charles had knelt in prayer with me, and I had gone out with a brave heart, as soon as I found myself alone in the street, a sense of fear came so overpoweringly over me, that I went like a shot past the men loitering near the public-houses in Butcher Row, turned down Pride Hill, retraced my steps hurriedly, and at last found myself at home within a quarter of an hour! ‘What! have you forgotten anything?’ said Charles, astonished to see me back so soon. Being agitated, I burst into tears, saying, ‘I *cannot* go out at night; it’s no use trying.’ However, next day, I managed better. Having first asked the wives if I might call at night, and my offer being thankfully accepted, I went with thorough comfort, feeling that I was expected; and from that moment I have never been timid. Often, unattended, I have been at ten o’clock P.M. a mile from home, and have never met with any incivility in the streets or elsewhere.

the same thing. It is very strange how we misapprehend the character of the working-men!

Dearest Caroline, such is my feeling about the great work of saving souls, that I never could be happy again to sit down in a drawing-room, subject to the conventional rules of society. I am sometimes sorry that my beautiful harp is neglected; but am I not a thousand times happier now than if I spent the time in playing those lovely old pieces by Bochsá and La-barre which I used to revel in, days gone by? We shall have a golden harp ere long!

Life is to me unspeakably precious now—too precious to spend in anything which will not bear fruit eternally.

Mr ——, one of the borough magistrates, told somebody one day last winter, ‘I saw Mrs W—— walking home from her visitings at ten o’clock last night, as I was going to see a friend off from the station—she was escorted by the most notorious poacher in the neighbourhood.’ I knew the fact as well as he did—the man had been three times in prison, some years ago—but I knew a fact he did not know, that that man had been attending church, twice every Sunday, for ten months; and whatever his past character had been, he was a faithful member of our society, and had gained the respect of the best men. If such are to be regarded as outcasts, for whom did Christ die?

Your affectionate sister,

JULIA.”

Another man, whose initials I forbear to put, because he is one of my very best friends, and has been often mentioned in the preceding pages, was spoken against to me by his clergyman and other persons. However, I set my heart on that man's coming to Christ, so I treated him from the first like a brother, and he is now, I hesitate not to say, one in the true Christian sense of the word. A single anecdote will suffice to shew how fruitless it is to expect to do any good by harsh words. I went to see him one day when I knew less of him, and he looked rather put out.

"I've had the Rev. Mr —— here this morning."

"Have you? I am so glad."

"But I am not, for I snapped off his head."

"O ——s! I am so sorry; he will say, 'These are the lessons you learn in St Alkmond's school-room.'"

"No, he won't; he knows better than that."

"Well, now, *do* tell me."

"Well, ma'am, he came in to ask if L—— lived near this, and I remembered that he had said to a friend of mine about me, 'So that drunken scamp ——s has come to live next door to you;' so, thinks I to myself, now you shall catch it—so I spoke rough of purpose, and just snapped off his head! He won't come in here again of a hurry."

"And why should you have been angry, ——s? Don't you think it was very wrong of you? Were you not a 'drunken scamp' once?"

"Yes, I was."

"Then why resent the truth? If he had said it *now*, you might feel it unjust."

"But was that the way to cure me? I lived close by him, and he never came near me to ask me quietly to be different. What right had he, I should like to know, to call me names to another party?"

"He is a good and kind-hearted man—the last man in the world to hurt your feelings intentionally."

"Well, I believe that, for he bears a good character; but it *was hurting*, any how."

"Of course it was; but the man who repeated it to you was the more unkind, and so were you to keep anger in your mind so long, about a chance remark, which perhaps, after all, was never made by him."

"Well, I never thought of that. I'm sorry now that I behaved so. If I see him again, I'll be different."

"May 1859.

DEAREST CAROLINE,—I wish those good people who believe I am bribing my men, could see our Tuesday night collections. By the close of last month we had collected, at seven times, the sum of £11, 5s. 6d. for the sick members! This in three months, remember! If we go on at this rate, we shall soon be an example to the good church-going people who sit in pews.

I think I told you that I have received £2, 3s. 6d. towards Stedman's grave-stone, within the last fort-

night. The erroneous notion that I am making the people hoard their money, makes us all laugh. It is seldom I ever have more on my books than £4 or £5 at a time from the whole set together! When any man's money amounts to £1, he is sure to draw it out for something. Nobody gets a bonus, unless he leaves it till the end of the year; and last year, the non-parishioners refused the bonus. Do you remember my telling you this?"

CHAPTER XIII.

Our Liverpool Trip.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose
under heaven."



" July 1, 1859.

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—It certainly was, as you say, rather venturesome, and what people were pleased to call *public spirited*, to take upon myself the risk and responsibility of an excursion train to Liverpool, by way of a counter-attraction in Show-week for my society. But, when you remember that the people themselves entreated me, four months ago, to make a trip for them during Show-week, there was really no *risk* about the matter. I felt sure they would not fail me when the time came, although it did look rather hazardous four days before we started to find one hundred of my guaranteed tickets still on hand! Many of the men could not tell until the previous Saturday whether they could go. None of the railway officials could be possibly spared, as some monster trains were to arrive in Shrewsbury, giving them extra work. Some who longed to be with us, did not feel justified in spending the money until they had cleared their debts, or clothed their wives and children in better array; and so scrupulous were these honest-hearted men that I should not find this

out, lest I should be at the expense of *giving* them the tickets, that they forbid their wives to tell me anything about the matter: it was only after the trip was over that I learned this accidentally.

Notwithstanding these disappointments, a large number of them (about 150, including wives and children) availed themselves of the excursion, most of whom remained for the two days. Our fares were 3s. 6d. each for the double journey, with permission to return by a certain train either the same or the next evening. About 100 other persons, chiefly of the working-classes, also joined the trip.

We started at seven o'clock in the morning from our station, in the presence of a large crowd, everybody having friends to see them off; all were in high spirits, the weather was lovely, and our engine looked quite gay decorated with waving boughs of fresh green.

We reached Birkenhead at 9.30. During our passage across the river I had ample time and opportunity to find out who from amongst our friends the teetotalers had joined our trip, and many a warm and hearty greeting was received and given. It enhanced our pleasure greatly to see so many who had been toiling hard and steadily to make up for years of irregular work, enjoying with their whole heart this well-earned and richly-merited holiday.

Amongst others, I was glad to see —, a shoemaker, who had told me a few days before, 'I've

led my wife the life of a dog for these twenty years! I'm resolved now she shall have an "*out*" as well as me and the lad;' and, true to his word, he had called on Saturday night for three tickets and paid me for them. He told me on the steamer, 'My wife was never five miles out from Shrewsbury in her life;' the happiness of his countenance in witnessing her enjoyment I shall never forget.

Upon arriving at Liverpool, we engaged a steamer to take the whole party, at sixpence a-head, a sail of two hours; slowly passing five miles of docks, and thus giving the people an opportunity of seeing the shipping, amongst which were some war-frigates and other fine vessels.

Our walking through the streets *en masse* was truly amusing. My husband, our friend Emma G——, and I led the way, preceded by one of the members who knew Liverpool well. We thus visited the Exchange, markets, Sailors' Home, St George's Hall, and the Derby Museum. The streets of Liverpool always appear to me densely crowded with human beings; we seemed, therefore, not at all more numerous than the throngs we met; but there was one peculiarity about our party—every one had either a basket of provisions or a carpet-bag with luggage for the night.

We invited all the members to a substantial tea at four o'clock, which Mr Erving had engaged to provide for us at his Temperance House in Norton Street.

After tea, the indefatigable sight-seers broke up into detachments and went to the Botanical and Zoological Gardens—at the latter there were some fine fireworks which astonished and delighted them; others went to New Brighton, Birkenhead Park, or to the Cemetery.

And here I must tell you a little anecdote about R. —, which pleased me greatly. Two days after our return from Liverpool, I was passing through the timber-yard in which he works, intending to visit J. J——, who lives in a field beyond (he is the old man who was ill some time ago). Seeing R. and his friend G. H—— engaged in conversation under the shed in which his sawing-pit stands, I was tempted out of my path to speak to them.

R. — was in raptures about the sights in Liverpool, and the great enjoyment he had had there.

‘But you have not mentioned the fireworks, Richard; did you not see them?’

‘No, I did not; and that’s the truth.’

‘What a pity! I thought they were so very good, from the account brought me by the others.’

‘Well, ma’am, the fact is, I seed some of the things I knew I should see there, for I saw them going in; and I couldn’t go after that for any thing. One such bold-faced one came straight up to me. I felt *that sorry* for her, poor thing. I never seed the like in Shrewsbury—such a bold one she was. I couldn’t go after

that to see the best fireworks that ever was ; I couldn't have enjoyed it in such company, could I ?

As he spoke this, he turned his head another way, looking down on the ground, with a burning blush to the very forehead. I honoured that man from my heart. Is he not a thousand times more of a gentleman than many who are higher born ? That man spent 6s. in toys for his children ; who could find it in his heart to say that the money was wasted ?

But, to go back to our Liverpool trip. As the detachments returned home in the evening, Mr Erving arranged to get them beds at respectable houses close by, and we invited all to breakfast next morning. It was impossible to assemble them to worship that evening, but the next day we met together at eight o'clock. Charles read Luke xi. 1-13, and gave a simple, earnest exposition, which was listened to with great attention, and then we all knelt in prayer. John T—— said to me a few days after, ' You prayed on Sunday night in the school-room that our Saviour might go along with us ; don't you think He answered your prayer ? for it seemed just as if He must have been with us, it all went off so happy and comfortable, and so peaceful.' Was not this a nice remark ?

Unfortunately, our second day was wet ; it rained with scarcely any intermission from seven o'clock A.M. till night ; but, as every one had come resolved to make the best of their holiday, and to be happy and grateful,

we heard no complaints. Charles and I had nice, quiet conversations with several of the people. The docks were explored by the men, and several large ships visited. The resolution to carry out the plan of a beautiful sail fifteen miles out into the sea kept up the spirits of the party so valiantly, that we all assembled on the steamer at one o'clock. We determined that it should be fine, and for twenty minutes watched the clouds with commendable patience, until at last the captain pronounced it a hopeless case, and the rain coming down in torrents, we gladly hastened to our comfortable quarters in Norton Street, the men taking care to provide cars for their wives and children.

The next expedient for amusement was more successful. Near our lodgings a clever photographer had hung out a most tempting placard for all weather-bound strangers—'Likenesses taken from sixpence upwards; equally good on wet days as on fine!' Nearly the whole party went to secure a portrait, as a pleasing remembrance of Liverpool, and these, when produced at tea, caused us endless amusement; many of them were first-rate as likenesses, and therefore very valuable to the owners.

Upon our return home, the first thing we heard was the fatal accident which had befallen Evans, one of the pointsmen belonging to the Great Western Railway, on Show-Monday at nine o'clock, whilst on duty at his post. He was a sober, well-conducted, and re-

ligious man ; his children had joined our juvenile temperance band, and he generally attended my meetings when not engaged at his work. I went the next day to speak a word of comfort to his poor widow, who would be, I knew, in heavy grief at the loss of such a kind and excellent husband. At her request I saw his remains, and was struck by the hue of health and vigour which his countenance presented, no palor of death being there. Oh, what poor comforters should we be, except for the blessed hope of Christ's coming, and the resurrection-glory in which all who love Him shall be partakers with Him for ever !

You will ask me, 'How did your men, who were left behind, stand amidst the temptations of the show ?' Considering that half remained in Shrewsbury, I think it is wonderful that only eight men fell : of these some have already come back ! The publicans spared no expense to make the show very attractive to the working-classes, and the revelry was extended to *three days*, and thus four of the men who were with us in Liverpool were also beguiled into drunkenness the day after their return.* I read in my Bible, 'Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also ! . . . The cup of the Lord's right hand shall be turned upon thee,' &c. And again, 'The love of money is the root of all evil.'

How low is human nature fallen ! that man will,

* Three of these have returned.

for the sake of gain, bind a fetter on his brother, which, if God do not interpose, shall chain him down to hell. Like Demetrius of old, they say, 'Ye know that by this craft we have our wealth,' and they act accordingly.

On Thursday evening, we had a better attendance at our prayer-meeting, although it was Show-week, than we have yet had; so we encouraged ourselves by remembering it is written, 'Greater is he that is with us, than he that is against us.'

Ever your loving sister,

JULIA."

It was during this week that Wm. L—— deliberately left us. Unlike the others, he was not overcome by temptation. On rejoining our ranks after his grievous falls, he continued humble and penitent for a long time, and gave us all, as we thought, cause to believe and hope that he was a subject of grace. In March he became ill, and for three months was unable to work. During this time his doctor ordered him to take porter—and when well enough to leave it off, he became unsettled—the love of drink revived. After being suspected by the other members of being unfaithful to his principles, he left us altogether, and at the same time gave up attending church and the meetings, and is now frequently intoxicated.

It is a fact, that has cost me much sorrow, that

nearly every man in my society to whom intoxicating drink has been ordered by the doctor, has gone back to drunkenness.

I would earnestly ask, why recommend a *narcotic poison* as a *stimulant*, when a TONIC is required? There are names of very high repute in the medical profession who *never now* administer such stimulants
IN ANY CASE.

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CHAPTER XIV.

Influence.

"A wise man scorneth nothing, be it never so small or homely,
For he knoweth not the secret laws that may bind it to great
effects.

The world in its boyhood was credulous, and dreaded the vengeance
of the stars;

The world in its dotage is not wiser, fearing not the influence of
small things.

Planets govern not the soul, nor guide the destinies of man;
But trifles, lighter than straws, are levers in the building up of
character."

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2. The second line of the document is a vertical line.

3. The third line of the document is a vertical line.

It has often struck me how little we think of the honour put upon us, as children of God, that we should be permitted to stay out our appointed term of days in a "world that lieth in the Wicked One," to influence others by our steady witness for God, instead of being removed from this world of sin and sorrow as soon as our hearts are turned lovingly to our heavenly Father, and we recognise, in some degree, the blessedness of our standing in Christ.

It is an honour which the highest archangel might covet.

Here we have the only opportunity in the whole period of our existence for proving, in the midst of conflict and trial, the reality of our gratitude to Him "who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," and of entering into a fellowship with Him, which higher intelligences may not know—a *fellowship in suffering*.

And here we have a mighty power—often silent and noiseless, like the dew, yet, nevertheless, most real and potent—for influencing our fellow-sinners; which is not to be lightly used or despised.

Sometimes a word, a look, has fixed the heart of a waverer to close with Christ, who, but for that, might have continued to wander further from the Good Shepherd, until at last he stumbled upon the dark mountains of error or infidelity.

It has been my practice since the work commenced, during an absence from home, always to write to the people a letter, which any one who supplies my place shall read to them on the Tuesday evenings. In August 1858, an incident occurred on one of my journeys, which, as it bears upon the subject of this chapter, may as well follow here in the form in which it was sent to the people.

. . . . "Upon getting into the train at the Gloucester station, I found two persons already seated in the same carriage—the one was a lady, the other a working-man. Seating myself beside the latter, I accosted him thus—

‘My friend, have you travelled far this morning?’

‘Yes, ma’am, I have; and I’ve got twenty miles to walk home from the next station.’

Then, thought I, my time for speaking will be short; and, looking up for guidance to make the best use of the opportunity for Christ, I began—

‘Can you read?’

‘Yes, I can a bit, and write too; but not much of either, I work so hard.’

‘What kind of work do you do?’

‘I’m farm-labourer, and get eleven shillings a week;

but it's hard work with such low wages, house-rent and everything to find with it, for wife and children.'

'Shall I tell you how to make it go further?'

'Why, yes; I should like to know how.'

'I daresay you spend threepence a-day in beer; suppose if you gave that up for a twelvemonth, you would save more than £4 by Christmas.'

'Should I? I never thought of that; but I'm sorry to say that threepence a day wouldn't always cover my ale. I spend more than that of Saturdays, when a lot of us gets together; but just look here, ma'am, if a man works hard he must drink, or what's to support him?'

'*Nourishing food!* Do you know it is the amount of food we *digest* which strengthens and supports us, not the amount we eat or drink. If the spirit or alcohol could be evaporated from the drink before you took it, you would find it insipid stuff. Now, it is the *stimulant* which *that spirit* gives you that cheats you into the notion that you are *strengthened* by it. You mistake this for being nourished and supported.'

'Well, I believe you are right, ma'am. I remember leaving off drink once for three months, and I never was better. But I'm a sober man, take me altogether.'

'I believe you, for you look as if you were; I can pretty well tell now, having been so much amongst our people at home, and at several death-beds caused by *drink*.'

'I wish, ma'am, we'd got you, or some kind lady

hereabouts, to talk a bit to us; there's nobody cares for us, except for the work they get out of us.'

'It's just that very thing that touches my heart about *you men*, all over England. You work hard all day, and in the evenings you are tired, and no one comes round then to speak a kind word to you.'

His eyes filled with tears. I added, 'You cannot tell *how dearly* my husband and I love our people at home—our *men* as well as our women.'

I asked him to accept a little tract, written for soldiers, called the 'Sentinel,' telling him it was quite as good for him as for a soldier. He received it with much pleasure, saying,

'I was a soldier for ten years, and only got my discharge two years ago, when I married.'

'I feel a very strong regard for soldiers; my dear father was twenty-seven years in the army; my only brother was a soldier; my grandfather served fifty-three years in the army; and I have many relations at this moment in the army.'

'Please, ma'am, is this religious?' asked the man, eyeing the tract with suspicion.

'Yes; and you will find it full of comfort: it contains many true things worth knowing, and some beautiful stories which really took place. Will you promise me to read it?'

'Yes, I will indeed.'

'May I ask you what you do on Sundays?'

'I work from six in the morning till five at night. You see, ma'am, I'm farm-labourer, and have got to look after all the cattle ; they must be fed and looked after.'

'Yes, of course, they must. Have you got a Bible or Testament ?'

'No, I have not.'

'Will you promise me to endeavour to read one verse every day if I give you one ?'

He was silent for a moment. '*Do consider*, my friend, you and I are to *live for ever*. This life on earth is but as a shadow, it is passing away quickly. Look back on the past ten years, don't they seem as nothing to you ?'

'Yes, they do indeed,' said he, looking very grave.

'*Men die as they live*. Do not lose another day. *Begin to-day*. Here ; I will give you a Testament, but first, let me read some verses about Christ, to shew you how deeply God has loved you, and me, and all mankind.'

I then read Heb. iv. 14-16. 'Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'

‘When you feel afraid of coming to Christ because you are so sinful, read these verses.’ I marked them.

‘It is very comforting,’ said he.

I then told him how Christ had lived on earth thirty-three years in the condition of a working-man, that He might enter into the trials, sorrows, and temptations of working-men; that He left His great glory in heaven to die for our sins; that He was buried—we need not fear to lie in the grave; that He lives again, and is at God’s right hand in resurrection glory, wearing OUR HUMAN NATURE in heaven, amongst the hosts above and the holy angels, shewing Himself as *our Brother*, the *pattern Man*, to whom all who now come shall be made like, when He appears in glory at His second coming.

As I spoke on earnestly, the poor man drew close to me, and I saw the expression of his face gradually change into joy, deep and beautiful, mingled with astonishment.

‘O ma’am, nobody ever spoke like this to me before! I *will* come to Him, indeed I will, this very day. God ever bless you for talking like this to me.’

‘Look, my friend, at another passage of Scripture, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”’

‘Though nobody could say I was a drunken man,

nor ever was used to swearing, yet for all that, *I feel I am a sinner. I'm not fit to die. I often wish as I was forgiven.*

'But why *end in wishing?* why not *make sure?* What did Christ die for, but to make peace with God for you? Do you believe He died for the sins of the world?'

'Yes, I think I do.'

'Then why not *for your sins?*'

I told him to come and to confess himself as a sinner, who could not do without Christ, and to tell God that He had said, 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.'

'Pray to Him to forgive you all your sins for Jesus Christ's sake.'

The tears filled his eyes; he said, 'Maybe I shall never see you again, till I meet you in heaven. I bless God for your kind words to me; nobody ever spoke to me on religion before. I live two mile away from church, and I work till five o'clock of Sundays, so I can never go to church, for it's all over by then. There's nobody I can open my mind to.'—He added with an earnest look, 'I wish, ma'am, as you lived near us, to stir up my wife and me, for we are very ignorant of these things.'

'Open your heart to *God*. Ask Him to give you the Holy Spirit for Jesus Christ's sake. He will teach and guide you.'

I then read Heb. ii. 9-18, turning down the leaf, also John xiv. 1-4, marking the passages.

His eyes glistened through his tears, he looked so happy, and thanked me repeatedly. I then gave him the Testament. He wrapped it carefully with the soldier's tract, and put it in the breast pocket of his jacket. In another moment, the train stopped where he had to get out. He grasped my hand heartily, saying, 'God ever bless you, and if we never meet again on earth, God grant we may meet in heaven.'

'Come to Christ heartily, we shall then without fail meet in heaven; God bless you and your wife,' and so we parted.

Dear friends, I regret that I did not in the hurry of our brief interview ask his name or address, nor give him mine; for then I might have influenced him, though living at a distance. But God can do that right well through His Word contained in the Testament by His Holy Spirit, without need of me or any other person. And now, dear friends, I ask one thing, lift up your hearts sometimes for this your brother, for whom I for one shall not cease to pray. Remember he has no advantages of a free Sabbath such as you have. The first time any person, and that a perfect stranger, spoke to him of Christ, he *listened* and *believed*. Surely this 'Bread cast upon the waters shall be found after many days.' To Him be all the glory."

When leaving home, just before my illness, E—— the sweep put a letter into my hand from a friend of his, who had enlisted, and was stationed at ——.

“Just please to read this, ma’am, and write him a bit of a letter ; for he don’t seem very comfortable in his mind.”

The letter was very short, and seemed written in low spirits. He spoke of the dulness of the station, that many a man “did away with his self,” because he could not desert.* I wrote him a long letter as soon as I was able, posting it the first week in June ; in which it was the aim to make Jesus Christ, an object of love and affection. My brother, who had fallen in India during the mutiny, was mentioned, and his earnest love to, and faith in, his Saviour named ; and by the same post some tracts and small books were sent.

In due time an answer came, in which P. the soldier expressed much gratitude for my letter, and the presents sent him.

Thus a correspondence was commenced, which grew in interest as my friend’s heart opened to the claims of his Saviour, and the blessedness of living to Him, and using his influence in saving souls.

The last letter received from him was dated “Feb.

* It is an insular station.

19, 1859." After expressing his satisfaction at the progress we were making in Shrewsbury, and assuring me that he would continue to pray for me and the teetotallers, he says :—

"Dear friend, we have three prayer-meetings in the week, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, and my comrade leads the meetings; and on Sunday and Thursday nights we have service in church, and there is a very good number attends it; and on Tuesdays we learn to sing, our comrade —— learns us—oh, he is a splendid singer, he leads the choir in church, and you can hear his voice so plain and distinct, and he has learnt me to sing bass. Dear friend, we have now got fourteen serving the Lord, and we are looking for more, and we trust they are in earnest. And, my dear friend, you hardly hear an oath made use of in this regiment since we came out here; if my comrade hears any one swear, he will stop them, and ask them for the meaning of the word they have just used, and then he will explain the meaning of the word to them, and talk very serious to them concerning their soul's salvation, and he will explain to them the danger of their sin, and I am very happy to say he is doing great good in the regiment; and drink he cannot abear, he is constantly speaking of the evils that arise from drink.

Dear friend, we had a lecture on Wednesday afternoon, and the barrack square was full of people, both civil and military. —— was the lecturer, and I

spoke after he had done, as it was his request that some one should speak a little after him ; so he pitched on me, and I explained the evils of drink, but I could not explain it as well as ——, for he had received his education at college, but he was too wild, and he was a very great drunkard. But since he came out here, he has not, I believe, tasted any kind of liquor ; and I can say, since I knew him, he has taught me a great deal about history and Scripture, and he is, I can safely say, a true Christian. The men in the regiment has christened him John the Baptist, and he answers to that name, but always says that the name is too good for him ; but the reason they gave him that name is because he is a Christian. Dear Friend, I will now tell you who my comrade is : His uncle was Dr —— who died preaching the gospel at —— Street Chapel ; he dropped down dead in the pulpit, and was buried in —— Cemetery, in the Town of —— in Yorkshire : and his father is a minister of Christ, and he himself received an education fit for any officer ; but after he became the age of fifteen he got into bad company, and from that to the beer-shop, and then came the gambling-table, and he left his father, and enlisted in the —— Regiment, but was bought off by his father, and he stayed at home one month, and then he listed again, and was again bought off ; but this third time he would not leave the service, and he has been in it ever since. But I think I shall soon

lose him, for his father spoke of his going home the first opportunity; but he says he will not leave me until the regiment is a regiment of Christ as well as the world. He turned from his wicked ways on board ship coming out the voyage; and I often saw him of a night in the rigging, praying, and overheard what he said; and I often saw him speaking to the men on board of the danger there was in the night we lost poor Smith—he was praying the whole night that the Lord would save H. Smith from hell and damnation. Dear ma'am, if I have not told you about that poor man's death, H. Smith, please let me know, and I will get my comrade to give you a description of that voyage; he has wrote it to several people, and given them the description. My comrade — says that he should like to have a line from you very much. I told him of your kindness writing to me, and he as well as myself returns you many thanks for the book you sent me—the life of Captain Vicars. He knew him, and had conversations with him. Dear friend, all my Christian comrades send their best respects to you. I will put my comrade —'s address at the end of my letter, in case you should think it worth your while to drop a line to him, he would gladly receive it.

Dear friend, we have proposed to give a speech on Tuesday next upon teetotalism, in the barrack square. We have wrote upon pieces of paper, and posted it on

the corners of walls, to announce it. This is what we wrote—‘There will be a Lecture given in the Barrack Square, on Tuesday night next, by two private soldiers of Her Majesty’s —— Regiment,’ and we hope we shall have a good number attend. I like to hear my comrade lecture, he puts me so much in mind of Carus Wilson in his speech, he is very plain in his speaking.

I am sorry to announce the death of one of my poor comrades which was struck by a rock, dear friend. He was on a plain cutting rushes for the commanding officer, and the day was very wet; and it is rather dangerous when it is wet, and I will tell you the reason why: there is wild goats on the rocks, and the sun is very hot nine months of the year, and the other three it is wet; and when the goats walk on the rocks they knock them down, and if there is any one under them the rocks hit them, and if a rock falls on a man, fifty tons weight, he has not much chance of staying in this world. Dear friend, a rock fell on this poor man, and put a hole in his head four inches long. The poor fellow met his death on the 14th, and was carried to his grave on the 15th. He was a Roman Catholic, he belonged to my company, and he is much regretted by all who knew him. My comrade —— spoke to us about sudden death, the night he died, and he was the means of bringing one soul to the Lord, and I was the means of bringing one; and I pray God that, before long, I may be the means of bringing more to the

Lord. Dear Madam, I have not much more to say at present, only I hope the Lord will give us all strength to continue and hold steadfast in the love of God ; and, my dear friend, let your earnest prayer be that the spark of fire which has begun in the army, may blaze into flames before long, and that we may have an army of God-fearing men, as well as defenders of our Queen and country. That is my comrade's prayer every night closing the meetings, and I hope it will be yours, dear friend."

This interesting letter closed with a request that I would send him a copy of the "Pilgrims Progress," and any book to his comrade which might be useful in lecturing at their meetings. Of course, his wish was complied with ; and "The Book and its Story" was sent to his comrade.

The eventful history of P.'s comrade is another proof added to many thousands, how God overrules man's unruly will to His own glory. ——'s influence in that regiment, who can estimate aright until *that* day shall arrive which will reveal all things !

One of the best effects of our recently formed society is the influence gained by the men over one another. They are quite astonished at the discovery of this power, which they hardly knew they possessed before.

It is a pleasant thing, after their working hours, to meet the men strolling together, or standing in

groups; when I see Richard E——, I know full well that James R——, Thomas C——, and George H—— are not far off.

“I’ve just been walking out with John B——,” said John P—— one day to me, “and I hadn’t gone far before I met John W——, Richard B——, and Halford P——; they looked so comfortable together, so we joined them, and as we all walked together, who should we meet but Charles T—— and Francis E——, and we then saw Richard E—— and his three companions, till at last we were quite a party, and we said, ‘Well, we don’t want for company anyhow; we teetotallers don’t need to go to the public-house for that.’”

My twelve district-visitors, after talking over the subject together, intimated to me their wish to meet together weekly for prayer and conversation, by themselves, by way of strengthening and encouraging each other; and we agreed that it would be a very good plan. At their request I promised to be present *monthly*, to hear their report of their respective men, and to join in prayer with them for a continuance of God’s blessing. How encouraging to find these twelve men such able helps to me, and men of such truly changed and Christian spirit! Who can tell what amount of influence God has in store for them amongst their fellow working-men?

We began in the third week of this month (August 1859) a weekly meeting for women, from which I

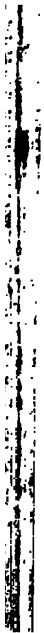
expect great things, after Mrs Bayly's plan, as named in her admirable book "Ragged Homes, and How to Mend Them." We shall teach those wives who are unable to use their needle, to cut out, mend and make all the underclothes for themselves, their husbands and children, and during our conversations (for after our opening prayer and Scripture reading, friendly discourse shall be encouraged) we will strike up some good recipes, and all sorts of valuable hints on housekeeping, &c., with the help of the clever and the good wives. During these evenings, subjects shall be fixed upon as a guide to our talking. What an immense influence for good may be exercised at these meetings! How much may be said on the subject of *home education of children*, and *duty of wives towards husbands*, and God's claim upon us as *heads of families*, which may have a rich blessing!

The husbands are in great glee about these meetings, and the women look forward to them as a great boon. It is an advantage to have gained many hearts, so that we begin without any suspicion on their minds as to our motives, for they know we love them and seek their good.

CHAPTER XV.

Can the Law do nothing to Help?

“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”—PROV. xiv. 34.



ONE day, as I was passing ——'s house, I looked in at the open window, to ascertain if his wife was in. Not seeing her, I was passing on, when a neighbour in the street called out, "He's up stairs at his work; shall I call him down?"

Before I had time to answer, she shouted aloud, and —— popped his head through the upper casement.

"Do not take the trouble to come down, Mr ——" (but seeing me, he ran down instantly, and opened the door). "I only meant to look in for one minute to see your wife, because I did not like to pass your door without doing so. I am afraid you will think I am always hindering you, I come so often."

"Well, I want to speak to you particular this morning."

"I hope nothing has happened?"

"Well, I'm in a bit of trouble."

"Are you? Do tell me; I am so sorry."

"I've had a letter that has caused me to shed a lot of tears."

Saying this, he put into my hands the following letter, which is literally transcribed, the spelling alone having been corrected.

“Will you please to read it off aloud?”

I did so, and was greatly touched by its contents.

“DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,—I make no doubt you will be surprised to hear from me, if you don’t know about your brother E—— leaving me in the manner he has. He has left me ever since the 27th of April; I have never seen nor heard from him since, which I take to be very hard, to be left with five children, three as cannot do anything towards maintaining theirselves. I have strove to keep them, and now I find my health won’t admit me no longer; I must trouble the parish, which is a great grief to me.

Little did I think when I was married to your brother that I should have seen the trouble that I have. My life has been a life of trouble and slavery; *but for all that, I am anxious to know what is become of him.* It seems so unfeeling to leave me and five poor children in this sort of way. He must be found some way or other. I have been told by a party that he is with some of you. I hope you will some of you have the kind heart to send me word whether he is or not. . . . Please to write as soon as you possibly can, to let me know as much as you can about him, for my

poor heart is ready to break. I must now conclude, with kind love to you both.—I remain your affectionate sister,

—————.”

I offered to answer this letter if he felt unable to write, which ——— thankfully accepted.

“Don’t trouble about it to-day; it will do by Saturday night, when I come up about the sick fund money.”

“Oh no, ———, do not keep her waiting for an answer; poor thing, her heart is sad enough. I will write it for to-night’s post; and you can have it when you come up to the prayer-meeting.”

I took care in my answer to point the poor mourner to Jesus, the source of all comfort, especially to one heart-stricken as she was. I said to ———, “How is it that he has left her? was she an untidy wife?”

“No, indeed, the very best; I should say, as good a wife as ever was, and a good mother too. But I know how it is. He’s on a drinking *spree*, that’s what it is. And yet he’s as kind-hearted a man as ever was, a brother I loved, and I’d go any distance to find out what’s become of him.”

My heart sickened. What can be done to hinder men from brutalising themselves with drink, injuring soul and body? and then, the poor wretched wives

and children—who sympathises with the drunkard's wife? Nobody.

Oh, shame upon a Christian country, that our present beer-laws should be defended, and that in some places by *magistrates upon the bench*! With all our high-standing as a people who fear God and respect His Sabbaths, in spite of our time-honoured institutions, and the evenhanded justice of our laws, what an anomalous spectacle do we present in the eyes of the world—A NATION OF DRUNKARDS!

How wise is Satan! In a land where the free Bible is circulated, to put such a mighty hindrance as the love of strong drink! for what power so resists and neutralises the gospel like the power of alcohol? It keeps thousands away from ever hearing the sound of it.

I have seen strong men, between the paroxysms of drunkenness, full of alarm, and struggling to be free; they have wept like children before me, and could scarcely find terms of self-reproach too bitter. But, the self-same day, the *thirst* returned (oh, how awful is the drunkard's thirst!), and then fell every good resolution; *with the first glass the power of self-control was gone*; * entreaty, supplication, earnest pleadings, these were all in vain; the hold grew tighter, and they sank deeper and deeper into the yawning gulf.

* A working-man said one day to me, "The *first glass* is to us like what the first taste of blood is to a tiger."

In vain have wives sent for me to implore their husbands to relinquish the bowl—the *fatal first glass* had dashed any influence I possessed to the ground.

I ask, in the name of humanity, can no law be made classing the wilful, determined drunkard with the *insane*, and thus rescuing him by merciful compulsion from self-destruction; ay, and fouler murder, too—that of his wife and children—saving them from starvation, cold, nakedness, and, perhaps, eternal death?

How they would bless God for such a law, when the thralldom ceased to exist! *They have said so to me, many times, in their sane moments.*

Such cases are, alas, only too frequent; but I will name one in our society.

E. J.— had never been known to be sober for so long, as the five weeks that he kept the pledge after he joined us, on February 12. Upon breaking, his wife sent in her anguish for me. He was lying on the bed in the upper chamber in which they lodged. I shall never forget how she caught at my influence over him as her last hope of happiness on earth. His remorse and shame appeared truly genuine; but, as he was then in drink, I had had too much experience to feel much confidence in it, though I did not for a moment doubt his sincerity. I knew his power of self-control was in abeyance, and that he was held fast in the fetters to which he had again yielded himself. Before six hours had elapsed, he was again drinking, and

went on for another week. He lost his employment, left his wife and young children, one of whom was a sweet girl on her death-bed; she now lies in the cemetery—her enfeebled constitution the natural consequence of her father's fatal habit; five months have passed—he is still on the tramp. If he had continued sober he could always have commanded employment, for he was a clever workman, and was in the receipt of first-rate wages.

Can there not be a law to protect men from *the importunity of publicans*? Wives have told me in their anguish of the ways and means used by landlords of public-houses to entrap their husbands; how they will follow them to their employment, walk home with them in all the frank-heartedness (apparently) of disinterested friendship, and get them back into the net, which they make henceforth doubly fast and secure around them.

The saddest instances of drunkenness are those of women. On the 13th November, Tom ——— came to join our society, as open-hearted and fine a fellow as ever lived—a man who received good wages too. He used to be fireman to an engine-driver, but was then attached to a steamboat which carries the necessary materials to and fro for making the Severn Valley Railway. There were three men belonging to that steamer who signed the pledge; the captain was one, who now works at another department, under the same

master, and being a steady and superior man, is become one of my district-visitors.

Tom —— held on bravely for nearly seven months, and when he fell, there came such a tale of sorrow about his wife, who had for years imbibed the fatal passion for drink, that my pen cannot write it. Broken-hearted, or rather driven to desperation, could it be wondered at that he broke the pledge, got into disgrace, and lost his situation? To my great sorrow, he has now left the neighbourhood.

Now, here is a case where the law might befriend a husband and family of young children. What safer, fitter place for such a woman than a lunatic asylum? Often and constantly had she neglected the cries of her little ones for bread; in vain did her husband earn good wages—she was insatiable after the drink. Many a time had he taken the children away, and left her—she had followed him once even to Spain, not because she loved him, but she needed his earnings. What is he to do with her? who can cure a *drunken woman*? God can, and has done so; but the cases are rare—*so rare*, that they form the exceptions to the general rule.

I was calling one day on Mrs ——, who, to her honour be it said, had confessed herself a drunkard, and signed the pledge in my presence; and, thank God, she bids fair to keep it for life. Seven months have passed without reproach, during which time she has been a consistent wife and mother.

When I called on her one day lately, she burst out into self-reproach about her past life. Perhaps it was the fact of my noticing her youngest child which touched that chord in her memory. "Oh, ma'am, to think that I left that baby when it was but two months old—a *babe at the breast!*—and went off on tramp to ———. Why, the very beasts of the field are better than I was! *That drink!* it is a curse, indeed; it takes away all sense of shame, and hardens one to do the most desperate wickedness without a bit of conscience—things that make one shudder to think of *when sober.*"

Will it be believed, I have been found fault with by *clergymen*, both by letter and in conversation, for admitting *women* to sign the pledge. Can I see my *sisters* perish, and not hold out the same helping hand to them as to their husbands? Ask the chaplain of any prison, whether women are not as much in need of it as the men. If persons are really ignorant of *facts which lie around their path*, are they competent judges of what is necessary, and what is not? * Is not the case above named quite sufficient to silence all such weak objections? Does not that woman's husband bless me for the change wrought in his home? and will not her children bless me too?

* If clergymen would, as a *matter of duty*, make occasional visits to the haunts of vice in their parish, it would be good for their people, and open their own eyes to facts of which they are ignorant. A *detective* or policeman should always accompany them.

Last autumn, in the earlier days of my work, I said to the men as we sat talking at the close of our meeting, "Could any of you trust yourselves to take half-a-pint of ale, without fear of falling back?" I was a novice at that time, and thought it possible. All looked grave for a few moments.

"I couldn't," said C. W——, with his usual decision.

"I should be afraid to trust myself," said Stedman, who had finished his six months without reproach. I remembered it was a known fact, that during *seven years* he had not gone to bed sober, and I could understand his hesitation to touch the fatal cup again.

"I should be afraid too," said J. D——, who had also finished his six months.

"I only know," said W. E——, "I was the worst of all the lot; I was once six months drinking, and never sober for half-an-hour. I shouldn't like to try."

Thus, gradually, one by one confessed their fear to take the *first* glass. I felt thankful that God had put it into my heart to form a society, in which, as in a safe enclosure, these men might find a refuge from the drinking-customs which beset them, and meet a brother who would share with them the odium and scorn which in this world always follows those who are brave enough to break through conventional habits because they have found them injurious to soul and body.

"If the CLERGY could only see things which us men have seen," said John T—— one day to me, "they

wouldn't be against teetotalism, as they mostly are. *I wish they would come amongst us at nights, and learn what our habits are, and talk with us men on this subject of drink.* Why! I've seen men in beer-shops take the boots off their feet, and sell them for a trifle, for drink, and then they'd walk home *bar-foot*; I've seen men sell the shirts off their backs, and go home without; and, what's worse, I've seen women pawn their children's clothes for drink, and the poor little things have run crying along the streets after their mothers, shivering with the cold; and next day they've cried to go to the Sunday-school, and couldn't go for want of clothes."

"Ah, John, it's because chaplains of prisons see *the effects of drunkenness* more than other clergymen do, that we find them stronger on this subject than they are. Mr D——, the chaplain of our county gaol, tells me that he has, without signing any pledge, given up the use of all stimulants for the last three years, because he felt so greatly the necessity of setting an example of total abstinence to the prisoners. He declares that nearly all who are sent to prison fell into vice through drink."

"Indeed, I believe, ma'am, except for the drink, there wouldn't be half the crime committed."

In a London paper, I saw a strong letter on this subject, written by the Vicar of Erchfont, dated July 16, 1859, in which he quotes the words of a "gaol

chaplain," which are so much to the point I cannot help transcribing them. Speaking of the present system of beer-houses, &c., he says:—

"The whole system is little better than a gigantic public nuisance, and an especial curse to the community; it opposes itself on every hand, as an insuperable barrier to all our efforts to educate and improve the social condition of the people. It is vain to expect effectual legislation on this question, until we have evoked a far more powerful opinion upon it than at present exists; *and it is equally vain to expect such public opinion, so long as the great body of the clergy refrain from taking active measures to arouse it.*"

Drunkenness is not confined to the lower classes, nor to *men*. I have known elegant, educated women, once an ornament to society, who were, while yet young and attractive, subject to some mysterious malady, the nature of which only those who knew them intimately were aware of; it was a customary thing for them to be carried helpless to their rooms at night. Stimulants given, from mistaken advice, during early childhood, to persons in whom susceptible feelings, highly impulsive character, and a delicate constitution are combined, have often laid the foundation for future misery, and caused that craving which, in after-years, has become the tyrant of their existence. Were it not

for the sake of sorrowing husbands and children, who may chance to read these pages, I could say more on this sad subject. Some of these unhappy mothers have passed into the unseen world at an early age. The worst part of the subject is, the disease engendered in the parent is hereditary; and with a predisposition for drunkenness, how few would have the strength of mind to withstand! I say nothing about principle; religious principles have, of course, never been instilled by such parents.

A medical man about ten months ago, when congratulating me about the influence I was exerting amongst the working-classes, added, "I wish you would come and reform some of my *lady* patients; I assure you there are some whom I cannot possibly benefit by any skill; they have their secret stimulants, by taking which, they undo all the good I would desire to effect."

"Why do you not tell them so?" He could not answer, but with a smile and a shrug of the shoulders, passed on.

The best, the *most sober*, and most sensible women amongst the wives of our members, have signed the pledge, to sympathise with and strengthen their husbands, and to shew in the most unequivocal manner, their hearty approval of a movement which has brought

peace, plenty, and comfort, to their homes. One of these said to me lately, "My husband used to drink most Saturday evenings. I never knew when to expect him home any night; and as for going to a place of worship, such a thing never entered his head. Now he is at home every evening, and he's become such a reader! then he goes every Sunday to his place of worship, and he teaches in the Sunday-school also; and every Sunday morning he's off to the prayer-meeting that's held at seven o'clock."

"What! a working man give up his only morning for lying in bed, to go to a prayer-meeting?"

"Yes, ma'am! and that's not all, he says he'll never rest till he's got me to go too; he says I must manage it as soon as ever baby is old enough to be left with the other little one; and he declares it's the best hour of the whole week, and makes all the rest go well."

Will any one be sectarian enough to say, "But did you say nothing against his going to a dissenting chapel?"

"I never had a clear head for God till I signed the pledge," said John — one day. "It's all nonsense about moderate drinking for us working-men; they called me a moderate drinker, but now I would rather have *none at all*. There's no hankering after the idle company now, and when you get along with a lot of men that's drinking, you must do as they do."

"How is it, mother," said John ——'s little girl, "that father goes down of his knees to pray to God of nights and mornings now, and sometimes other times too? He never did so till he signed to Mrs W——!"

Facts like these, proving that the giving up this debasing habit, clears the head for God, and sets a man to *think* and *pray*, are enough to convince any one that God's blessing is on our side.

One other case of a woman who has signed the pledge, must be mentioned. Her husband is in the militia. Last year when the regiment was quartered in Dublin, she used to be reeling drunk, and was noisy and abusive in the extreme. Rough materials cannot be manufactured into an elegant fabric; but in spite of her loud talking ways, I love Mary's highly demonstrative character. She sits with earnest intelligence at our meetings, and knows how to conduct herself in silence there and at church; and through her influence, zealous pleading, and example, more persons have been brought to sign, than by any one else; and what is very remarkable, not one whom she has brought has ever broken. If I had declined receiving the signatures of women, what would Mary have been now? For nearly a twelvemonth she has ceased to take that stimulant which excited her to deeds of a revolting character; she might perhaps have been now a lost spirit in hell, with others whom she had influenced to sin. She has often said, "I was going straight on the

way to kill myself, I was such a drunkard." Having a strong will, and great energy of character, she has a great power for evil or good in her hands. I have listened to the confessions of her former life with amazement. Her husband signed a few days after she did, and is a constant attendant at church and the meetings.

A man who for twenty years had never gone to bed sober, joined us on the 1st of March ; he was then sixty years of age. Everybody liked him ; he had always been a quiet, inoffensive, good-natured man, even in drink. At last, he felt a constant pain in the chest, a "gnawing void," to use his own description. He felt sure the drink was injuring him ; so he went to a temperance meeting held in another part of the town, and signed the pledge. But a fortnight after, feeling a strong desire to join us, he hardly knew how to get "cheek enough to face the lady, and sign teetotal in her presence." He therefore primed himself with a glass of brandy ; still not feeling up to the mark, he went to another public-house, and took a second glass. He then attended the meeting for the first time, and signed the pledge afterwards. From that time a marked change came over him. He never missed going to his parish church twice every Sunday ; and the Bible-class at the clergyman's was punctually attended. In May he caught a very severe cold by keeping on his wet clothes after a heavy rain. He

neglected this cold, until it was too late to repair the mischief. And when too ill to get about, he sent for me to visit him. This was the first illness he had ever had, and therefore the trial was the greater, but he never spoke of it as such. He could only magnify God's grace, who had given him time to see the error of his ways, and to turn, as he hoped, to his Saviour.

"I hope, John, that the people do not think I am killing you with the total abstinence."

"I don't see how they can, seeing I've only tried it a bit better than three months. It's more likely to be with the many years' hard drinking."

"Ah, that's it. We must expect some in our ranks to die: there are several who have been injuring their constitutions so long, they must break down soon, and then the total abstinence will get all the blame!"

"That's not fair at all, ma'am; it's too late for some of us to repair the mischief done. I wish we had, many of us, signed years ago."

It was beautiful to see the patience and gratitude, the faith and love of this poor man. I never saw anything more lovely than the bright beam of delight, whenever I spoke of Christ. When pressed to name anything we could send him, he would answer, "I want for nothing that I can't buy, thank God! My wife saved a good bit of money with selling that coal; she attended to it whilst I drank, and she put by a bit all the while; so we don't want for nothing to make me comfortable,

and there's many in need; and we couldn't bear to impose on you. *I only want you to read and pray with me as often as ever you can.* I should dearly like you to come every day, but that's too much; it's such a way for you to come this hot weather."

With such an invitation I went almost daily; and I sometimes hoped, with the blessing of God on the good nursing of his wife, and the constant attention and kindness of his doctor, Mr F——, that he would recover. But God willed it otherwise: he gradually faded away, and as his outward man decayed, the inward man gained strength daily. He was constantly in earnest prayer, and so fully did he trust in his Saviour's blood and righteousness, that though he would speak with loathing of his past life, he never for a moment doubted his acceptance in the Father's sight. He always spoke of having *lived in sin* up to the time he joined us, and that it was not till after he signed the pledge, that he came to the Saviour. "How could I, when I was walking another road all the while?" The fact is, until then there was no struggle against the besetting sin; although I have since heard that he had attended church pretty regularly for three years before, "even when he was drinking," said his pastor. "Anyhow, it was *you* first put me in the way," said John to me the last time but one I saw him alive; "and I've cause to bless you for it; I am sure God sent me to you, when I first came." Will he

not have cause to bless God through eternity, for the total abstinence pledge, as an instrument for removing the besetting hindrance in his path to the Saviour? It should be mentioned, that whilst we have lost only two men in our society by death—their constitutions being too much injured by drink to be benefited by total abstinence—we have, in the same period of time, attended the death-beds of six men *in Butcher Row alone*, victims of intemperance, whose deaths nobody could lay to our charge (as some persons did the deaths of the above-named two), because they had never signed the pledge.

It is touching to hear, long after they have joined us, what courage it required for these honest-hearted men to come at first; and how necessary it was for some of them to be “primed,” to give them courage to come before me, and before the assembled meeting.

“I’ve worked hard, and got into a great heat with it many times,” said J. R—— to me one day; “but I never knew anything like what I felt the first time I ever came to your meeting—I was just melting. I tell you this just because I think you ought to know it. It’s that first time that requires such pluck—there’s some could never do it. If I’d known what it was, I don’t think I could have come at all. But now I couldn’t stop away, if it was ever so.”

On Sunday, August 7, I was visiting A——’s wife,

who had recently had another infant ; she said to me, " Do you remember my brother —, who joined your society a year ago, and broke in a few days ? "

" Of course, I do ; he never would see me afterwards. How is he going on now ? "

" Oh, he's been in bed three months, quite helpless ; he is not able to turn in his bed. His mind's quite gone ; he can't understand for two minutes together what anybody says to him. "

" Will he die, do you think ? "

" Oh, bless you, he don't eat anything to keep him in life, he haven't for long enough. He's done nothing hardly but drink for three years. "

It was useless to promise to see him, as I was going from home next day early. He had left our parish, so I could not ask my husband to do so for me.

" What is his age ? "

" He's quite young, *he's only thirty-two.* "

Had this man been placed in a lunatic asylum when he first became a drunkard, he might now have been a respectable member of the community.

Nearly all the working-men die from diseases brought on by drinking. Now and then one sees a hale drunkard of seventy years of age, and such a one has been pointed out to me by educated people, to prove the fallacy of my repeated assertions about the mortality amongst drunkards. I have asked men of that age—known drunkards—about the companions of

their youth, and have never met with one who had not seen them die off, according to the state of their constitution—some in earlier, some in middle age; these sturdy men have at last found themselves left alone, hardened in their sin, and without compunction or sorrow have spoken of the deaths of all their drinking companions.

Thomas Evans drank hard until, at the early age of twenty-seven, his constitution was quite enfeebled. It was then that Stedman used his influence to get him to sign the pledge. He did so, but in a very short time he fell back into his old habit; his health, however, had become so impaired, from the constant intemperance, that he was unable to continue drinking at the rate he had been used to do. He fell into a rapid consumption, and died, leaving a young widow and unhealthy infant.

"Couldn't I get a policeman to my master?" asked a woman in anxious dread of the return of her husband, who had been drinking all day. "I'm afraid of my life of him; for me and the children do get used shameful by him when he's drunk." I longed to be able to say, "Yes, the policeman has authority by law to put a strait-waistcoat on him until he has become sane."

One day telling this to a man who had been very drunken, he could not help laughing, and said, "*That would be a good law for us, as well as for our wives;*

it would save much sorrow on both sides, and keep us from killing ourselves."

The *drink sold at public houses ought to be inspected, quite as much as weights and measures are*. It is a fact, told me on good authority by a gentleman who can prove it, that the drink sold each day is prepared (adulterated) every morning; the remains left unsold are thrown away as unfit for use: this shews how poisonous it must be.

How it can be injurious to leave off at one stroke taking this horrid mixture, baffles all common sense to believe, even when medical men say so gravely!

I must here make an earnest protest against the countenance given to drunkenness—quite unintentionally it may be—by medical men; thus strengthening in the minds of our working-classes a notion, which is of all our popular fallacies the most fatal, that intoxicating drinks are, in some form or other, *necessary to health and strength*; especially when it is remembered that no working-man can possibly get anything of the sort in a less pernicious form than that which he buys at a public-house or beer-house. How sad, then, to give him, with a view to regain his strength, the very thing which has (in nine cases out of ten) caused his illness—if not immediately, yet too certainly! When nourishing, wholesome food is wanted, or a *tonic* required, why order a *stimulant-narcotic*, except in extreme cases, such as fevers, &c.,

where a tendency to nervous depression, if unchecked, might cause the vital functions to become faint, or perhaps to cease ?

See the consequences in one case out of thousands which might be adduced. The policeman mentioned in a previous chapter ("Encouragements and Discouragements"), was firm as a rock against every temptation from publicans, former companions, or those above him in station. He had long been a subject of organic disease, probably brought on (it was thought by his medical man, Mr F——) by early intemperance. The taking porter as medicine was urged on him by friends, but Mr F—— strongly disapproved of it as a remedy, and forbade his taking it. He afterwards became an inmate of the Infirmary, and consequently was under another medical adviser, who, unhappily, thought differently on this subject. John, however, steadily forbore availing himself of the permission to drink porter whilst there. When he left the Infirmary, and resumed his work, he continued an out-patient ; and when questioned as to his diet, he said he drank water. The necessity of taking porter was so strongly urged on him, that John felt it to be a duty to obey. Nevertheless, *he still waited a fortnight*, wishing to see me first before he tried it. I told him my opinion firmly and faithfully, and *left him free to act* ; warning him, however, that in nearly every case in our experience amongst the men, the doctor's prescription had brought

the patient back to drunkenness, and worse health, and in some instances, to loss of situation. A few weeks after, I met John in plain clothes, in a back street, looking very ill and dejected. He hurried on, after stopping a moment to shake hands with me. I could not rest till I saw him again next day at his own house—his look of sadness followed me—and then I heard such a tale of sorrow! he had fallen back to drunkenness*—had lost his situation in the police force, and was ill in mind and body. I could have wept with vexation, for all this might have been spared. He returned most thankfully to my ranks, saying, "No doctor in England shall ever persuade me to take another drop, even if he says it's to save my life; for it cannot do anybody good—it's only led me into temptation, and has done me no good at all."

The occasion of the principal outbreak which caused his disgrace ought to be known. A publican in our parish was married lately, and in honour of this event a quart of ale was allowed to *each policeman*!

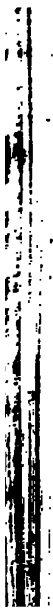
"Why didn't they treat the poor *coalheavers*?" asked J. R——, with a *significant* smile, which elicited a similar response from the men who were present when he made the remark. *The reason was too obvious to need explanation.*

* The first glass *cannot* be safely taken by one who has been intemperate—it revives the thirst for more. The craving is that of a madman, and all but absolutely irresistible. *Ought medical men to act as if ignorant of this fact?*

What is *the use of a police force* which is allowed to be bound over to the interests of heads of drinking-houses? In what places, I ask, is all the crime which the law punishes, generally concocted? "When Bishop and his partner," says Sir Benjamin Brodie, "murdered the Italian boy, in order that they might sell his body, it appeared in evidence that they *prepared themselves for the task by a plentiful libation of gin.*" The same course is pursued by housebreakers and others who engage in criminal undertakings.

Will no one bring this subject forward prominently as it deserves to be before the Legislature, and see whether something cannot be done to rescue human life, to save the 60,000 annual deaths in Great Britain from this most fatal poison—alcohol? I have only put together a few desultory *facts*. "Consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds."

APPENDIX.



It may be interesting to some persons to see our rules ; a copy is therefore given. The first six rules were made in June 1858 ; the seventh was added as a safeguard in August 1859, in consequence of the doctors' prescriptions breaking down every man who followed them ; the eighth rule was made at the same time, and gave immense satisfaction. The signatures have not been less numerous since it was enacted.

RULES
OF
St Alkmund's Total Abstinence Society.

INSTITUTED JANUARY 1858.

1. All signatures of Members shall be received in presence of the others, after the Scripture Reading on Tuesday nights. If in any case this is not possible, the name of the new Member shall be given in, and a deputation appointed to receive his signature.

2. If any Member breaks his pledge, he shall not be received again until he has given satisfactory proof that he has abstained from intoxicating drinks for the term of one month, after which he shall be admitted to sign on the following Tuesday night.

3. If the pledge be broken a second time, the term of probation shall be doubled. If, after this, it is again violated, the person shall not be re-admitted on any terms.

4. If any Member is suspected of having been inconsistent, it shall be named by a Member to the President, who shall mention it on the following Tuesday night, when the three oldest Members shall be authorised to sift the matter, and they shall give in their verdict on the next Tuesday night. In case of disagreement, the majority shall decide. If the report shall concern either of the three above-named, the next in rotation shall be empowered to act in his stead. The President shall listen to no reports, except from a Member.

5. The savings of all Members will be received by the President at St Alkmond's Vicarage, on Saturday nights, to which a bonus of twopence in the shilling shall be added. The bonus shall be forfeited by any one ceasing to be a Member.

6. Every Member shall strenuously endeavour to get new Members, and especially to strengthen and encourage those who stand, and to bring back the

relapsed with kindness, remembering that they themselves may be overtaken by temptation.

7. No Member shall be allowed to take porter, ale, or any other intoxicating drink as medicine, even if prescribed by a doctor, unless unable to work. A medical certificate must then be produced, stating the exact quantity of such stimulant, the hours it is to be taken, and the good it is to effect. If any Member infringes this rule in any particular, his or her name shall be struck off the list.

8. Every one, upon signing the pledge, shall pay threepence, which money shall be added to the sick fund.

Having been greatly harassed and perplexed for some months by the medical men breaking down even the stanchest members by prescribing porter, ale, &c., I wrote in my trouble to an eminent surgeon in Nottingham, whose name I chanced to see in a temperance pamphlet, in which it was stated that for seven years he had never prescribed alcoholic drinks under any circumstances. To my dismay, after posting my letter, I found that the date of the tract was 1838. However, an answer came by return of post, so thoroughly hearty and kind in its tone, and so satisfactory to my mind, that for the benefit of others who may be in the same dilemma, I transcribe it literally:—

"NOTTINGHAM, 12th September 1859.

MADAM,—It gives me pleasure to answer your letter received this morning. I cannot do better than write you an extract from a tract, out of print, I published twenty years ago, as follows:—‘The question is often asked, What medicine can we take as a substitute for alcohol? The answer is, Alcohol as a medicine “*is a mocker,*” and those only require a substitute “*who have been deceived thereby.*” It possesses no genuine properties as a medicine; if it were not for custom, and the perverted appetites of men, it would be for ever banished as a medicine. To those who think they cannot wean themselves without a substitute, the bitter infusion of gentian and of camomile, of the London Pharmacopeia, are as good substitutes as any. The infusion of gentian is prepared as follows:—

Take of gentian root, sliced, 1 drachm.

Orange peel, dried, 1 drachm.

Lemon peel, fresh, 2 drachms.

Boiling water, three parts of a pint.

Macerate for an hour in a slightly covered vessel, and strain.

Three table-spoonfuls to be taken two or three times a-day.

The other infusion of camomile as follows:—

Take of camomile flowers, 2 drachms.

Boiling water, half a pint.

Macerate for ten minutes in a covered vessel, and strain.

Three table-spoonfuls to be taken two or three times a-day.

Either of the above infusions may be taken for nine or ten days, and then to be discontinued altogether, as tonic medicines generally lose their effects, or become injurious to the stomach.

He doth 'He that physic to a custom brings
Brings his disease too, to accustoming.'

I am sick at heart with my professional brethren. More mischief is done by medical men than by all others to the temperance cause; it is true that half their practice would leave them if they did not prescribe alcohol. I believe many of them know better, but they cannot afford to keep a conscience. I wish you would get your teetotal brethren to ask their medical man to give them a WRITTEN certificate that wine, beer, ale, &c. &c., is quite necessary for their complaint, and likewise what it is expected to do for them. You may depend upon it they will not get any* medical man so to commit or convict himself. I never knew but one physician convict himself in that way. The certificate for ale, to be taken as medicine,

* In this my friend was mistaken; for I received a written certificate the next day from a medical man for one of our members, which I enclosed, to his no small amusement, in my answer to this letter.

got into the hands of a printer, who was about printing it as a curiosity, and asked my advice. I desired the printer not to publish it, as the physician had written to me in the meantime for information on the subject. The only way is for every teetotaler to be well-informed on the subject, and he will be able to combat with any medical man.

I have been actively engaged for more than half-a-century in a large medical practice. Half of that time I ordered, as customary, brandy, wine, ale, &c. &c., as a medicine. For the last twenty-five years or thereabout, I have *not once* prescribed it as a medicine or as a beverage. The consequence has been, that I have found acute disease more easily cured, and chronic disease much more manageable. During that time I have never met with a single case in my practice, either in medicine, surgery, or midwifery, but I have been able to treat more satisfactorily without alcohol than with it. Although surrounded by more than thirty medical men, not one of them has said that any of my patients were injured by the disuse of alcohol.

I have been asked how my pecuniary matters stood.

I have disregarded any pecuniary loss; but have followed the plain path of duty which I have considered my providential way, and, indeed, I dare do no other.

I may have been minus six or eight thousand pounds, but I have been well repaid by the success of the work, by the prevention and cure of drunkenness—an incurable complaint, before teetotalism.*

Take great courage in your work—persevere, and you will prosper. We have a Stronger for us than against us, who can conquer the world's divinity, 'the world, the flesh, and the devil.' I will give you anything, or do anything I can for you in the good work. I have received two letters similar to your own; one from a clergyman's wife, and another from a clergyman's sister.—I am, &c. &c.,

JOHN HIGGINBOTTOM."

I must also transcribe a portion of a letter received since, from the same gentleman, on the subject of the Irish revival, in which he mentions that the medical publication, called the "Lancet," had had two papers against the revival a few weeks ago, in which the cases were attributed to hysteria and epilepsy. He writes:—

"I ask the question, whether any medical man ever witnessed a MORAL change in any hysteria or epileptic patient—whether they made a drunkard sober—a

* Because (as a working-man, who spoke from experience, said one day to me,) "the *first glass* to a drunkard is like the first taste of blood to a tiger."

Sabbath-breaker a Sabbath-keeper? It is remarkable that, at the revival, conversion and teetotalism are simultaneous; and they will admit no vendor of alcoholic drinks into their ranks. On Wednesday last, I conversed with a tradesman who has been in the midst of it. He told me that the half has not been told. Who ever heard before of 20,000 being at a prayer-meeting? I trust the time is near when 'a nation shall be born in a day.' "

In Tract, No. 143, of the Ipswich Temperance Tracts, written by the same gentleman, John Higginbottom, Esq., F.R.C.S., a prescription is given in page 4 for pills, which is strongly recommended as "a good medicine for reformed characters; restoring the stomach better than all the tonics in the world. They act both as tonic and aperient, by restoring the digestive organs to their normal state."

In reading a most excellent pamphlet, "A Plea for Drinking-Fountains," by G. T. Wakefield, B.A., Barrister-at-law, I was struck by the facts recorded about the water of the street-pumps in old provincial towns becoming deteriorated. "It may be inferred," says the author, "that the power of filtration possessed by the soil has a limit which, if exceeded, as in the subsoil of old cities, the water percolating through it becomes unfit for drinking. (Norwich, for instance; and I

have been informed by Dr Thomson that the bakers of Paris have been prohibited the use of well-water, for making bread, on account of its impurity). Such are the waters of the surface well-pumps, which the way-faring poor—too often ill-fed,* ill-housed, and hard-worked—have to drink as the alternative to the public-house!"

In neglecting the supply of the purest water, what a sin have we been guilty of towards our poor brothers and sisters, whose lives, too little regulated by sanitary conditions, can ill afford to lose this prime necessary of life; and who ought to be supplied with it in perfect purity as well as in sufficient quantity!

In our Liverpool trip, we could enter into their appreciation of pure water; for in one long ramble through the streets whilst sight-seeing, three times I thankfully slaked my thirst at three public drinking-fountains, my example being followed by the whole party.

Ten months ago, at one of our meetings, it was unanimously agreed that the working-men of St Alkmund's Total Abstinence Society should erect a drinking-fountain at their own expense. To facilitate this wish, we went to the Town-Hall to consult the Mayor on the subject. In his absence we saw the

* "To wit, the adulteration of food, and deficient ventilation of the dwellings, especially of the London poor."

Town-Clerk, who told us that we need not go to the expense, as R. A. Slaney, Esq., M.P. for Shrewsbury, being a member of the Metropolitan Free Drinking-Fountain Association, had ordered five drinking-fountains to be erected at his own outlay as soon as the Water-Works Company could supply the water. This was good news for us, especially as ALL THE CONDUITS FOR PURE WATER ARE LOCKED UP ON SUNDAYS IN SHREWSBURY.* Can any one wonder at the prevailing drunkenness on Sundays, when there is no opportunity for the poor to get water if they want it? Ought such a condition of things to be allowed in any town?

Some persons have said to me, "Where is the harm of a poor man enjoying his glass of ale, with a little friendly chat, at a public-house occasionally?"

I visited ten beer-houses in Manchester last week, accompanied by a detective, and was told they were fair samples of all such places. It is not the temptation to contract drinking-habits which is the worst evil of such resorts, it is the *moral* atmosphere to which those who frequent them are subjected. The best-conducted public-houses cannot help being the haunts of vicious characters of both sexes, and actual experience proves the baneful effects on every one who frequents such scenes.

* This will probably cease to be the case, as a request has been made to the Mayor on the subject.

"The facilities afforded to the indulgence of intemperate habits is the principal cause of the crime that prevails."—*Lord Gillies*.

"If all men could be dissuaded from the use of intoxicating liquors, *the office of a judge would be a sinecure.*"—*Judge Alderson*.

"I find in every calendar that comes before me, one unfailing source, directly or indirectly, of most of the crimes that are committed—INTEMPERANCE."—*Judge Wightman*.

"If it were not for this *drinking, you* (the jury) *and I would have nothing to do.*"—*Judge Patteson*.

"How is it you have so many accident cases in your hospital?" I asked a surgeon, whilst visiting the wards of that noble building, the Royal Infirmary in Manchester. "Through drunkenness," was the answer.

Women of England, if no one else will take up this subject as it deserves, will *you* do so?

Oh, stand not aloof from it for any puerile reason! SOULS ARE PERISHING. "The Lord is at hand." Will *you* become total abstainers, and discountenance the fatal lie, banish the popular prejudice, that alcoholic drinks are wholesome as a daily beverage? The clearly-expressed opinion of thousands of the highest medical authorities is with us. Only make a firm resolve, in the strength of the Lord, and be not ashamed to con-

fess you have done so. By your hearty, loving, and steady influence, you will get multitudes in all classes of society to banish this hateful poison, alcohol, in *every* form, however fascinating, from their tables. And then we shall hope to see, ere long, our beloved England THE LAND OF THE FREE; and future generations shall bless your name.

THE END.



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